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In an exclusive article on AI and belonging, acclaimed author **Siddhartha Mukherjee** poses the question, "Can a machine ever truly say, 'I am also yours'?"

Toll in Venezuela's two quakes reaches 1,430, with millions more feared to lack sanitation and other basic needs as the first US aid flights trickle into Caracas, **Inside Jacket**

TN's R Harshitha made to re-run women's 400m hurdles alone due to a goof-up by officials. She eventually fails to qualify for finals at National Inter-State Senior Athletics Championships

Temperatures hit record highs from Switzerland to Czech Republic, Germany and Denmark, as a heat wave that baked western European nations this week moves to central & eastern region, **Inside Jkt**

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Properties at risk of losing waqf tag as deadline nears

The time for earning the waqf status for properties that existed before the Waqf Amendment Act 2025 came into effect is running out fast as the deadline for making corrections will end on June 30. Those who have still not uploaded information on the portal, called UMEED, face the risk of missing out on inclusion as the law does not provide for further extensions. **P 8**

Airline not liable for weather delays: Consumer panel

A Gujarat consumer disputes redressal commission in has ruled airlines are not liable for delays caused by circumstances beyond their control. It dismissed compensation claim against Air India filed by two passengers who were flying to Colombo from Ahmedabad via Delhi in 2016. It found the flight diversion due to dense Delhi fog complied with safety rules. **Page Opp**

K'taka to roll out G RAM G on July 1

After opposing central govt's VB-G RAM G Act and challenging it in the Supreme Court, Karnataka has decided to implement the new rural employment scheme from July 1 to safeguard rural livelihoods. The state will continue its legal battle, though, seeking restoration of a higher central funding share and changes to key provisions it opposes. **P 4**

Bengaluru-Chennai 100km e-way opens

With NHAI commissioning 25km stretch in Andhra Pradesh, 100km of Bengaluru-Chennai Expressway is now open for motorists. Until now, 71km stretch within Karnataka was operational. Motorists travelling from Hoskote to Baireddypalle will have to pay Rs 195 for a one-way journey in cars, jeeps and vans, and rs 290 for return trip. **P 3**

Contractor booked for manual scavenging

A contractor has been booked by Tumakuru city police in a suo motu case for allegedly employing three labourers for manual scavenging. The workers were asked to clean two pits at the KEB Association building in Tumakuru town. A video surfaced online, showing three men carrying excreta on their heads. **P 3**

3 more charged in Red Fort blast case

NIA has chargesheeted three more accused in the Nov 2025 Delhi Red Fort blast conspiracy, including an absconder linked to IED manufacture, testing and storage at Al-Falah University in Faridabad, taking the total chargesheeted to 13 so far. Eleven people had died in the Red Fort car suicide blast. TNN

Ayodhya donation theft: Bank officials under lens

SIT To Begin 2nd Phase Of Investigation

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FUND DIVERSION?

- SIT probe will **now map full donation chain,** identify gaps that enabled embezzlement
- Separately, UP police probing if **banking norms were followed** in depositing large cash donations
- **Deposits to be matched with collections** for amount discrepancies
- Bank officials to be probed **to examine if funds diverted or whether there were any gains disproportionate** to known income

Lucknow: The Ram temple donation embezzlement probe has widened, with bank officials who handled deposits of offerings now under scrutiny, even as Ayodhya police prepare to seek custody of the eight arrested accused to interrogate them about role of others and cash recovery.

The eight accused — Ramashankar Yadav, alias Tinnu, Anukalp Mishra, Avinash Shukla, Karunesh Pandey, Manish Yadav, Lavkush Mishra, Ram Shankar Mishra and Subhash Srivastava — are in judicial custody till June 29.

They will be produced before an Ayodhya court on Monday. Police plan to confront the accused with documentary evidence, CCTV clips and financial records to piece together the modus operandi and establish individual roles.

The three-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) set up on UP CM Yogi Adityanath's orders, meanwhile, is set to begin the second phase of its investigation. It had submitted a 50-page preliminary report to additional chief secretary (home) Sanjay Prasad earlier this week and is expected to visit Ayodhya for detailed field verification.

Officials said the second phase will focus on reconstructing the entire chain of donation handling — from collection to final deposits — and working on the gaps that may have enabled the alleged embezzlement of funds. The SIT is headed by Lucknow divisional commissioner Vijay Vishwas Pant, with IGP (Lucknow) Kiran S and finance department special secretary Neelratan Kumar as members.

▶May not be isolated, P 10

Champat Rai, Mishra resign from trust

After days of speculation, the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust confirmed on Saturday that its general secretary Champat Rai, and member Anil Mishra have resigned. Rai, and Mishra, who was responsible for supervising the cash counting procedure, have sent their resignations to the trust, said the trust treasurer. The trust would take a decision at its next meeting in July. **P 10**

HDK's 'reserved' chair for CM steals the spotlight at Bidadi township protest

Pearl.DSouza@timesofindia.com

Union minister Kumaraswamy sits next to an empty chair meant for Shivakumar at Bidadi on Saturday

Bengaluru: An empty moulded-plastic chair on the dais became the defining image of farmer protest at Byramangala, near Bidadi, on Saturday, symbolising chief minister D K Shivakumar's absence after Union minister H D Kumaraswamy had challenged him to a public debate on the proposed Rs 20,000-crore Greater Bengaluru Integrated Township (GBIT) project.

On the 470th day of the agitation, Kumaraswamy kept the chair "reserved" for the chief minister, though it remained vacant as Shivakumar attended Kempegowda Jayanti events across Bengaluru.

Protesters used the symbolism of the empty chair to reinforce their demand that the state govt must not acquire fertile farmland for the township project without the consent of the landowners.

The proposed township is being projected as a satellite city to decongest Bengaluru, but farmers fear it will deprive them of their livelihoods.

▶Don't...by coercion, P 4

Teachers' exam put off in Maha after leak, 3 held

Mumbai: Barely weeks after the NEET paper leak triggered nationwide outrage, Maharashtra's examination system has been hit by another major controversy, with the teacher eligibility test (TET) being postponed after police uncovered an alleged question paper leak a day before the examination, **report Mahiyar Patel & Manoj Badgeri**. Three men were arrested from Kongaon in Thane district on Saturday while allegedly attempting to sell the question paper, prompting the state govt to order a fresh examination. Preliminary investigations suggest the papers were brought from Delhi.

CM Devendra Fadnavis has ordered a special investigation team under Thane Joint CP Panjabrao Ugale.

▶Four sets found, P 11

Man dies after 'triggering' car blast on T'kuru highway, partner escapes

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

'LET US DIE TOGETHER'

- Cops suspect **a relationship dispute led to the incident**
- **Ramya had distanced herself from Nagendra** of Ankola after he insisted on marriage
- Nagendra **goes to Ramya's house Saturday; they argue**
- Her roommate says he **threatened them with a knife & forced Ramya to go with him**
- The pair leaves in a cab at 11am. **Roommate alerts police**
- **Cops call driver** and tell him to stop at nearest police stn
- **Nagendra overhears their conversation and tells Ramya, 'Let's die together'.** He then **stabs Ramya**
- **Driver** stops the vehicle, he **and Ramya escape moments before Nagendra triggers the blast**

Nagendra, the deceased, booked a cab for Ankola from Bengaluru Saturday

Bengaluru: A 28-year-old man was burnt to death after allegedly triggering an explosion while inside a cab on a highway in Tumakuru district Saturday. Shortly before he triggered the blast, he had stabbed his female partner who was with him in the same vehicle, reportedly saying "Let's die together".

The woman and the cab driver managed to escape from the vehicle moments before the blast, police said. The deceased, T Nagendra of Ankola in Uttara Kannada district, is suspected to have carried crude bombs in what police believe was the culmination of a relationship dispute.

Tumakuru SP Ashok KV said forensic experts were examining the scene to determine the nature of the explosive and establish the exact cause of the blast.

According to preliminary investigations, Nagendra and U Ramya Nayak, 24, had known each other for six years. Police said he had been pressuring Ramya, an assistant operation theatre technician at Sanjay Gandhi Hospital in Bengaluru, to marry him. She had reportedly distanced herself from him in recent months. On Saturday, Nagendra reportedly went to Ramya's rented accommodation in Byrasandra near Jayanagar in Bengaluru.

▶Threatened with knife, P 3

PM MEETS A SEYCHELLES ICON

IANS

PM Modi, who is on a 3-day visit to Seychelles, off East Africa, toured the National Botanical Garden there and fed 194-yr-old giant tortoise Jonathan, considered the world's oldest living land animal. The PM will be the guest of honour at the island country's National Day celebrations, marking 50 years of its independence from UK | **P 11**

Cabo of good hope: Tiny Verde to play Argentina

Nilesh.Bhattacharya
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'Morabeza' in Creole, Cabo Verde's local language, is an idea embedded in their social life and denotes the essence of a warm, spontaneous and unhurried pace of life that is typical of the archipelago off Africa's west coast.

At the Fifa World Cup in the faraway Americas, the world seems to be already in the embrace of Cabo Verde's warmth, seduced by the languid pull of the morabeza.

The island nation with a population of just over 500,000 announced their arrival with an upset-scripting draw with Spain. Their odds-defying journey now has taken them into the knockout stage after a third straight stalemate — a 0-0 draw against Saudi Arabia Friday being good enough to finish second behind Spain in a group that saw the ouster of pioneering champions Uruguay.

The reward for the debutants, who became the smallest nation ever to advance to the Round of 32? A dream clash with Lionel Messi and reigning World Cup champions Argentina in Miami on July 3.

GOAL RUSH

▶Iran's goal disallowed in 1-1 draw with Egypt, P 15

▶Dembele scores hat-trick as Norway rests 10, P 15

▶Has big hearts, P 15

Pesticides and Industrial Waste Render India's Water Unsafe to Drink
Lead Pollution Alarming: 69 Rivers in India Contaminated
MERCURY AT DANGEROUS LEVELS IN INDIA'S WATER BODIES
Plastic Pollution on the rise
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Bangalore Times

Sharmiela Mandre, Sudhan Sundaram get engaged in intimate Bengaluru ceremony

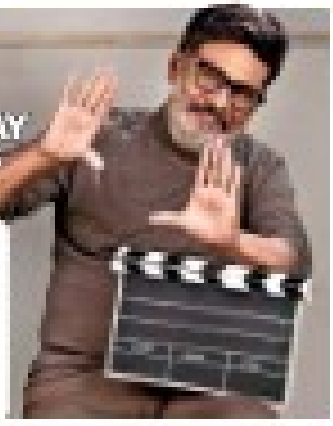
Buzzstop

VIRAL RUMOURS ON VIJAY DEVERAKONDA'S CANNAN DRAMA DEBUNKED

Laundry Mate / It's about time.

K BHAGYARAJ
1953-2026

THE SCREENPLAY KING TAKES HIS FINAL BOW



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Citizens & Govt Agencies Come Together To Plant 15 Lakh Indigenous Saplings Across City, As Part Of Mega Plantation Drive. **TOI** Partners With NGOs & Mobilises Over 200 Volunteers, Who Collectively Plant 8,000+ Saplings On The Day

1.5 Million Saplings, 1 Mission

Pics: Syed Asif & TOI

Vindhya Pabolu & Niranjan Kaggere | TNN

Bengaluru: In a major push towards strengthening its green cover, the city Saturday successfully attempted a Guinness World Record by planting 15 lakh indigenous saplings on a single day across multiple locations, marking one of the largest coordinated urban plantation drives ever undertaken in India.

Organised by the state govt and Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) as part of a mega plantation drive (Bengaluru Urban Ecological Restoration Mission) held on the occasion of Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Jayanti, the 12-hour campaign aimed at large-scale ecological restoration through native species plantation and development of urban green spaces. **The Times of India** too was part of the greening initiative.

Saplings were planted across key BDA-developed green zones such as Banashankari Stage 6, Kannahalli, Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout, Shivarama Karanth Layout, Oxygen Tree Parks and Miyawaki forest pockets.

12 HOURS, 243 ACRES: From students and RWAs to corporates and officials, thousands of people participated in the mega plantation initiative Saturday to help Bengaluru reclaim its 'Garden City' identity. The sapling plantation effort began as early as 6.30am

Challenges on rocky landscape

Unlike at the annual forest department drives where pits are pre-dug, volunteers at BDA's mega plantation drive had to dig them themselves. Rocky terrain and inadequate tools made the task strenuous, with many teams taking considerable time to dig 3ft-deep pits and managing only four or five before tiring. Though BDA later supplied crowbars and other equipment, rising afternoon temperatures forced many volunteers to leave early, sources said.

Gaps in on-ground guidance

Despite BDA's plan to create urban forests using the Miyawaki method, deviations were reported at several sites. Inadequate supervision led some volunteers to plant monoculture species, while spacing norms of 2-2.5 metres were often ignored, with saplings placed less than a foot apart. Many saplings had also dried up after being transported the previous day and left without watering in the intense heat.

MAR launch & Kempegowda Run

As part of this programme, 'Kempegowda Run 2026' was also held in a grand manner. Thousands of runners participated enthusiastically in the 5km and 10km races. The run started and ended at SM Krishna Road, Challaghatta Metro station. Chief minister DK Shivakumar also inaugurated the 11km Major Arterial Road (MAR, in pic) connecting Magadi Road and Mysuru Road.

Spot registration chaos & more

Several plantation sites in Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout saw confusion after spot registration was allegedly closed, leaving walk-in participants unsure about joining the record drive. Volunteers also faced transport difficulties during dispersal, as BMTC buses were not readily available. With Kempegowda Jayanti celebrations drawing crowds nearby, many participants had to walk long distances to reach Metro stations and bus stops.

> My friend told me about this event and it instantly sounded interesting. Since none of us had done something like this before, we decided to come together as a group, participate, and make it a new experience. It also felt like a good way to spend time together while doing something meaningful
> **Prajwal Acharya** | JP NAGAR 6TH PHASE RESIDENT

> We came to know about this drive through an NGO and wanted to be part of it. Areas like Banashankari need more greenery for the next generation. We also do gardening at home, and seeing so many people participate together was really fascinating. My son was also very interested in planting saplings, so I thought it would be good to show him how to care for the environment from a young age
> **Varun MR & Ved Viaan** | BANASHANKARI RESIDENTS

> We are soldiers, and for us, planting trees is also a form of service — just like protecting the nation, we see it as protecting the future. We are all from Bengaluru, and we are here to serve in whatever way we can
> **Anand CL** | PRESIDENT, ALL KARNATAKA EX-SERVICEMEN ASSOCIATION

> Looking at the hundreds of people that gathered for this drive, it showed society coming together for a common cause. This is our chance to save the Garden City, and today's participation reflects how proactive the younger generation is in bringing about change
> **Akshith M Tholakapalli** | TRUSTEE, YOUTH FOR PARIVARTHAN

> Bengaluru has changed a lot over the past 10 years. Back in my college days, the temperatures were not this high, but now we need to pause and act. This initiative is a good step in that direction. It shows that both govt and citizens are concerned about improving Bengaluru's green cover
> **Basavaraj Dyamagond** | CSR EXECUTIVE, SMARTSOC SOLUTIONS

> We focus on environmental initiatives and collaborated with **TOI** for this drive. We gathered around 625 volunteers, including college students and general participants. We are happy to see growing interest among people to take part and make Bengaluru greener, with the hope of a better future for the city
> **Raghavendra BS** | MANAGER, KARNATAKA VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT, YOUTH FOR SEVA

Working alongside NGOs Youth For Seva, Youth For Parivarthan, and SmartSoC Hope Foundation, **TOI** helped bring together more than 200 volunteers, who collectively planted 8,000 saplings.

Through this initiative, **TOI** reinforced its commitment to driving public action beyond awareness, enabling meaningful on-ground impact for a cleaner, greener Bengaluru. The collaboration also highlighted how partnerships between govt agencies, civil society organisations, and citizens can create lasting environmental impact while encouraging community ownership of green spaces.

The drive saw massive citizen participation, with thousands of volunteers, including students, RWA members, NGOs, corporate groups, environmental organisations, and govt officials, coming together for the sapling plantation exercise across 243 acres at multiple locations. From as early as 6.30am, volunteers gathered at 279 planting sites and got down to brass tacks.

Restoring city's identity

Chief minister DK Shivakumar said, "The entire city has come together to plant 15 lakh saplings on Kempegowda's birth anniversary. By planting and nurturing these trees, we're taking a step towards restoring Bengaluru's identity as the Garden City."

BDA chairman NA Haris said: "The successful plantation of 15 lakh indigenous saplings is one of the most significant environmental conservation programmes undertaken by BDA. We're giving a new direction to urban planning by adopting sustainability at every stage of development. Our mission is to build well-equipped and eco-friendly settlements."

BDA commissioner Major P Manivannan said the successful implementation of a campaign of this magnitude required meticulous planning, coordination with various govt departments, civic organisations, and thousands of volunteers. "BDA formulated a system of scientific planting, selection of indigenous species of saplings, and post-planting management," he added.

To facilitate travel, the civic authority operated free BMTC buses from nearby Metro stations and major bus stops to the plantation sites, besides arranging equipment such as mattocks, trowels, and crowbars. Food points, water kiosks, refreshments, and medical facilities were also provided free of cost to participants.

DELICACIES NEXT DOOR:

Bengaluru's home kitchens fuel a hyperlocal food trend

From Biryanis To Baked Goods, Residents Turn Apartment Kitchens Into Food Hubs, Reshaping How Neighbours Eat, Earn And Connect

Tina.Shashikanth@timesofindia.com

There is a quiet, comforting revolution unfolding behind the locked gates of Bengaluru's apartment complexes—and it begins in the kitchen. Once reserved for hurried breakfasts and family dinners, these spaces are now powering a grassroots food movement. A new generation of home chefs is turning personal passion into neighbourhood enterprises, one order at a time.

Unlike glossy, venture-funded cloud kitchens that dominate delivery apps, these businesses are hyperlocal and personal. A few floors away, or in the next block, a neighbour may be kneading dough, tempering spices or plating desserts. For residents of these apartment complexes, the realisation is surprising: some of the most satisfying meals come from within their own compound.

BAKING MEMORIES: A home chef and baker, Kalpasree Mallesh (third from right) of Malleswaram says it took her many years to master the art of baking. Her pizza bombs—golden, pillowy pockets, bursting with pizza filling—sell like hot cakes

From Hobby To Hyperlocal Husle

The journey often starts modestly. A love for baking, a treasured family recipe, or years spent cooking for loved ones gradually becomes something more when neighbours begin placing their requests.

The model is simple and appealing — low overheads, flexible hours and a ready-made customer base. There is no need for a storefront or a marketing blitz; word spreads through WhatsApp groups, lift conversations and community noticeboards, creating a food economy that feels personal and local.

Part of the appeal lies in the connection. A bottle of pickles or a slice of chocolate cake comes with a story — who made it, which kitchen it came from, and why it tastes the way it does. Customers aren't just ordering food; they are supporting someone they know. In fast-paced city life, that can often feel impersonal, the sense of familiarity makes a difference. Eating becomes an act of participation, not just consumption.

> Ordering food from home chefs in an apartment community offers a healthier and more personal alternative to restaurant meals. Home-cooked food is often more hygienic, freshly prepared, and can be customised to suit individual tastes and dietary needs. It also brings the comfort and wholesomeness of traditional flavours.
> **Megha Mahantesh** | TALAGHATTAPURA

Food Builds Communities

The rise of these micro-kitchens is reshaping how residents of these housing complexes interact. Digital noticeboards, once limited to maintenance alerts and complaints, buzz with recommendations. Messages like "the ghee roast from C-Block is a must-try," and "filter coffee is back this weekend — don't miss it," soften the edges of high-density living. Food becomes a bridge between strangers sharing the same address.

"Cooking is more than just a profession; it is my way of sharing healthy and tasty food within my community," says Vedha Vishant Nayak, who is based in Herohalli, and runs a small kitchen from her apartment. "The most rewarding part of this journey has been witnessing how a simple meal can bring people together and build trust," she adds.

> The trust and support from my community motivate me to keep improving and serving better every day. Seeing people enjoy my food, and come back for more brings me immense happiness.
> **Nikita Singhi** | PANTARAPALYA

Renewed Sense Of Purpose

For these home chefs, the rewards go beyond income. Many are women who stepped away from full-time careers to raise families and are now rediscovering a new identity. Others are retirees, empty-nesters or professionals seeking a slower rhythm. Running a home kitchen offers autonomy and a sense of recognition. A glowing review, a repeat customer, or a neighbour stopping by to say thank you can be deeply validating.

As home chef Nikita Singhi from Pantarapalya in Bengaluru says, turning her cooking into a business within her community has been incredibly rewarding. "It feels special to know that my meals are a part of someone's daily routine or a moment of comfort," she says and adds that cooking is not just work for her, "it's a way to spread joy and connect with people."

Societies Warm Up To Trend

Apartment associations, once cautious, are gradually adapting. Concerns about delivery traffic, safety norms and the use of common areas remain, but many communities are choosing regulation over restriction. Weekend pop-ups in community halls, curated food festivals and resident-led "taste days" are becoming common and give home chefs visibility. What was once seen as a nuisance is increasingly viewed as an asset for the community.

Choosing home chefs also supports local entrepreneurs and encourages small businesses within the community, says Megha Mahantesh of Talaghattapura.

The Goodness Of Home-Cooked Food

The appeal of this trend lies in its accessibility. Barriers to entry are low, risks are manageable, and growth is organic as the feedback is direct. For customers, the appeal is authenticity — meals that taste like home, made by someone who understands flavours and preferences. It signals a shift towards micro-entrepreneurship rooted in community rather than scale.

Shraddha Gupta

"The most rewarding part of this journey has been turning my passion into a meaningful daily practice — baking feels almost meditative to me. It has also provided me with an opportunity to continuously learn and grow while working from home," says Shraddha Gupta, who runs her bakery business from her home in Talaghattapura.

More Than Just Living Spaces

As Bengaluru grows, its apartment complexes are evolving into more than just living spaces. They are becoming ecosystems — incubators of creativity, resilience and small businesses that reflect the people living within them. The rise of apartment cloud kitchens captures this transformation, highlighting how food can anchor community life, spark conversations and offer dignity through work.

The next time your phone buzzes with a food update, it may not be from a restaurant across town, but from a kitchen just down the corridor — a reminder that in Bengaluru's apartment communities, food is becoming a way to build both livelihood and belonging.

> Receiving heartfelt feedback or hearing that my healthy breakfast options have made a neighbour's morning easier is incredibly fulfilling. **Vedha Vishant Nayak** | HAROHALLI

LEARN SPOKEN KANNADA

Lesson 7B

Speaker	Conversation in Kannada	Meaning in English
Customer	namaskaara, baTTe istri maaDteeraa?	Hello, do you iron clothes?
istriwaala	howdu madam, eSHTu baTTe ide?	Yes, madam. How many clothes do you have?
Customer	nalku shirt, eraDu pant, ondu rESHme seere matte eraDu panche ive.	I have four shirts, two pants, one silk sari, and two dhotis.
istriwaala	sari madam, yaavaaga bEku?	Okay, madam. When do you need them?
Customer	ivattu raatri bEku. pant-ge crease neat-aagi irali, shirt collar tight-aagi istri maaDi.	I need them tonight. Please make sure the pants have a neat crease and the shirt collars are ironed stiffly.
istriwaala	khanDita madam kelasa neat-aagi irutte	Sure madam. The work will be done neatly.
Customer	cotton baTTe-gaLannu huSHaaraagi istri maaDi. rESHme seere matte panche-gaLige innu hecchu huSHaaru.	Please be careful with the cotton clothes. Be extra careful with the silk sari and dhotis.
istriwaala	chinte bEDa madam, naavu tumbaa varSHadinda maaDtaaiddivi	Don't worry, madam. We have been doing this for many years.
Customer	sari.oTTu eSHTu aagutte?	Okay. What is the total cost?
istriwaala	oTTu eppattu rupaayi aagutte.	The total cost will be Rs 70.
Customer	sari, dhanyavaadagaLu. raatri barteeni.	Okay, thank you. I will come tonight.

Kannada Word	English Meaning
baTTe istri	Clothes ironing
rESHme seere	Silk sari
panche	Dhoti
irali	Let it be / Make sure it is
innu hecchu	Even more / extra

Singular	Plural
seere	seeregaLu
panche	panchegaLu
baTTe	baTTegaLu

QR code for the audio lesson

Match the Following

Kannada words	English words
1. chinte bEDa	a. Total
2. huSHaaru	b. Seventy rupees
3. oTTu	c. Don't worry
4. irali	d. Careful
5. eppattu rupaayi	e. Let it be
6. innu hecchu	f. Even more

Lesson7A exercise section2 -recording with correct answers

Winners of the May 30,2026 contest

Revathi Sampath | Dr. K S Agarwal | Kannoly Vijayan Nair

Exercises: Section2

Translate the following sentences into Kannada. Read out the sentences, record your voice and upload the recording by scanning the QR code below by July 28, 2026 (Sunday), 11.59pm. Top three submissions will be recognized in the next publication.

Questions for the voice recording contest:

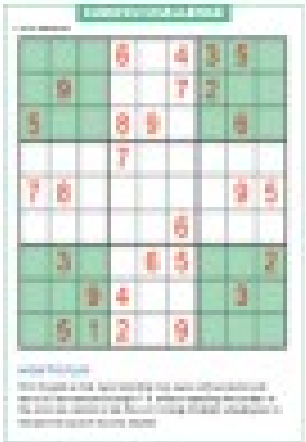
1. Will you be able to iron all these clothes by tonight?
2. How many clothes do you have? And when do you need them?
3. What is the total cost?
4. Can you be extra careful with the silk sari and dhotis?
5. I have four shirts, two pants, one silk sari and two silk dhotis.
6. Don't worry, I will reduce the total cost for these clothes.

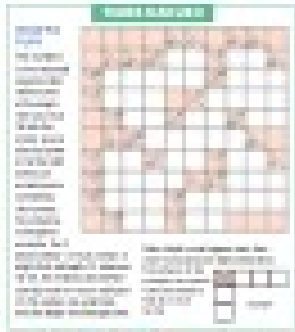
Created by Makaranda: https://makaranda-er12.onrender.com

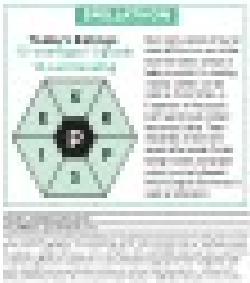
The shortest way to do many things is to only do one thing at a time • Mozart

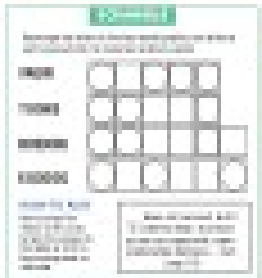
Studio receives open letter for AI use of child actors' voices

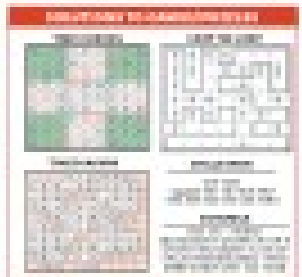
LEISURE











100km of Bengaluru-Chennai e-way open, car toll at ₹195

25km Bethamangala-Baireddypalle Stretch Commissioned In AP

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Bengaluru: Motorists can now travel on nearly 100km of Bengaluru-Chennai Expressway after National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) opened an additional 25km stretch in Andhra Pradesh.

In early 2025, NHAI opened a 71km stretch within Karnataka – from Hoskote to Bethamangala (KGF). After a gap of nearly one-and-a-half years, Bethamangala-Baireddypalle section in Andhra Pradesh has now been thrown open to traffic. This is the first section of the expressway to be opened in Andhra Pradesh.

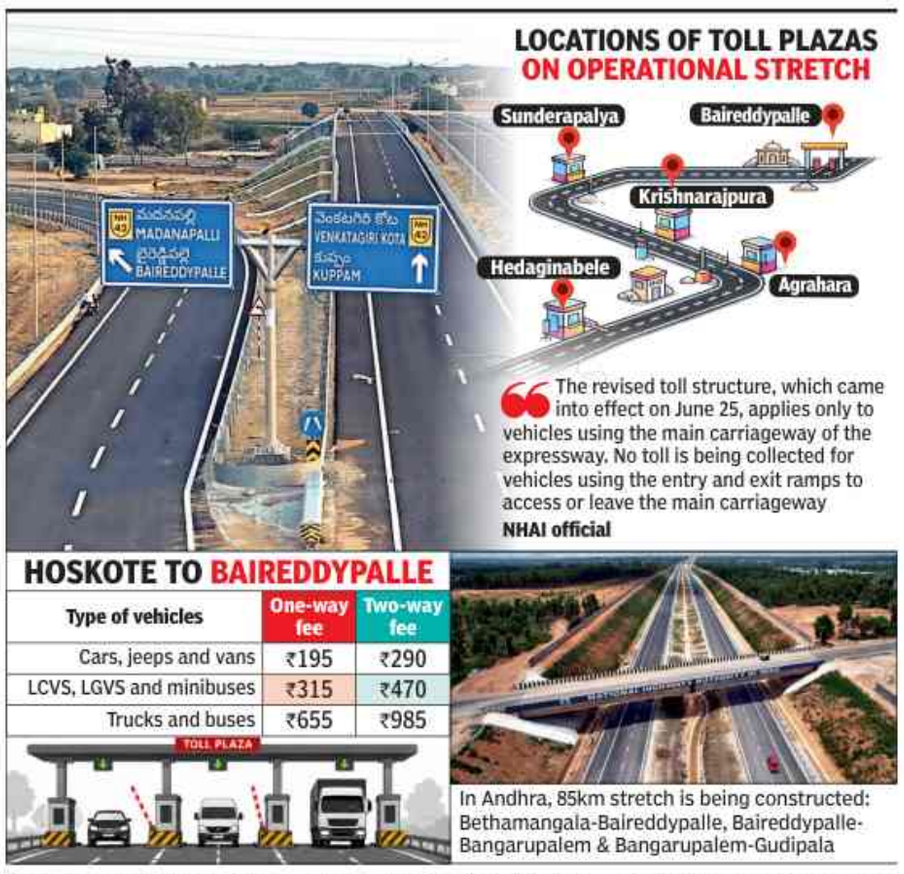
Within Andhra, NHAI is constructing an 85km stretch of the expressway in three packages: Bethamangala-Baireddypalle (25km), Baireddypalle-Bangarupalem (31km) and Bangarupalem-Gudipala (29km).

An NHAI official said two of the three packages in Andhra Pradesh have been completed. "Bethamangala-Baireddypalle section has been opened to motorists. A portion of Baireddypalle-Bangarupalem stretch is pending due to forest clearance issues. In this section, the works have been completed, barring 11km. The pending works include the construction of underpass for movement of wild animals. The third package, from Bangarupalem to Gudipala, was completed more than a year ago. We expect to open the entire 262km expressway, including the Tamil Nadu section, by the end of Dec 2026," the official said.

The official said opening of the stretch from NG Hulkur (in Karnataka) to Baireddypalle is benefiting motorists travelling to Chittoor, Tirupati and Chennai.

"After exiting the expressway, motorists use district roads that connect to the national highways leading to these destinations. Since the opening of the stretch, a good number of vehicles have been using it," the official said.

Baireddypalle toll plaza is collecting an average of Rs 2.2 lakh in toll revenue daily.



"The revised toll structure, which came into effect on June 25, applies only to vehicles using the main carriageway of the expressway. No toll is being collected for vehicles using the entry and exit ramps to access or leave the main carriageway
NHAI official

HOSKOTE TO BAIREDDYPALLE

Type of vehicles	One-way fee	Two-way fee
Cars, jeeps and vans	₹195	₹290
LCVS, LGVS and minibuses	₹315	₹470
Trucks and buses	₹655	₹985

In Andhra, 85km stretch is being constructed: Bethamangala-Baireddypalle, Baireddypalle-Bangarupalem & Bangarupalem-Gudipala

Contractor forces workers to carry excreta on head, booked

Tumakuru city police registered a suo-motu case against an contractor on charges of employing three labourers for manual scavenging. The incident took place Thursday morning when the workers were asked to clean two pits at KEB Association building in Tumakuru town, police said.

Based on the complaint filed by constable Raghu SR, police registered the case against contractor Guruprasad. Raghu said he came across a video online, showing three men carrying excreta on their heads without any safety gear. "On inspecting the video, I realised it was KEB Association building. I visited the spot and found that two pits were cleaned. I interacted with workers and others from the association who claimed Guruprasad had assigned the three for manual scavenging," his complaint read.

An officer said Guruprasad had told the men they needed to carry mud and other waste materials. "But found that we had to carry excreta on our head. They agreed to do so for money." Guruprasad is yet to be traced. TNN

₹2.9 crore cash seized from gunny bags in factory shed

Bengaluru: Acting on a tip-off, police raided the premises of a cement factory in Kurubarahalli, west Bengaluru, and seized Rs 2.9 crore in unaccounted cash stuffed inside gunny bags.

Cops detained factory owner TM Nagaraju and business partner BB Venkatesh. The case has been handed over to the income-tax department for probe into source of the funds.

The operation unfolded on June 2 after Mahalakshmipuram police received information suggesting that crores of rupees were being hidden in a shed belonging to Sheshadri Industries. A raid of the factory premises led officers to the cement shed, where they uncovered multiple gunny bags packed with cash totalling Rs 2.9 crore.

During interrogation, Nagaraju laid out a timeline of severe financial distress to explain the presence of the massive cash hoard. According to police sources, Nagaraju said he secured bank loans exceeding Rs 3 crore in 2018 to expand his business.

To keep the business afloat after Covid-19, Nagaraju turned to informal financial networks. He claimed the Rs 2.9 crore was an accumulation of hand loans from six persons, including his chartered accountant, to settle his dues. TNN

CM to lay foundation stone for 2km tunnel project today

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Bengaluru: Motorists using the busy Hebbal flyover junction will soon have to endure yet another major construction project as BDA is set to begin work on the proposed short tunnel aimed at easing traffic congestion between Hebbal and Mehkri Circle.

The 2.2-km, six-lane bi-directional tunnel will originate from Hebbal junction, pass beneath the railway line and a section of Outer Ring Road (Tumakuru Road side), continue through veterinary college campus and emerge on Ballari Road near the University of Agricultural Sciences staff quarters.

HEBBAL JUNCTION

The project is designed to provide signal-free corridor for traffic, particularly between the city and Kempegowda International Airport.

Construction activity is expected to gain pace in the next two weeks. Excavation for the tunnel will be carried out to depths of 5.5 metres to 18 metres (18 to 60 feet).

BDA will construct the short tunnel using the cut-and-cover method. Under this technique, a trench is excavated from the surface, a reinforced concrete tunnel structure is built within it and the trench is then backfilled and the surface restored.

Transport minister Byrathi Suresh, who represents Hebbal assembly constituency, said chief minister DK Shivakumar will lay the foundation stone Sunday for the Rs 1,139.7-crore project.

File photo

Transport minister says Hebbal junction can be crossed in two minutes via tunnel road, which now takes 30 minutes in peak hours

18-month deadline

BDA has set an 18-month deadline for its completion. A senior official said the design has been approved and the agency will soon coordinate with police to prepare a traffic management plan.

A source said the tunnel will begin near the loop of Hebbal flyover close to the tree park. The entry ramp will cater to vehicles arriving from KIA side, while the exit ramp will emerge on Ballari Road (national highway), opposite the garage near Hebbal lake.

The massive construction activity is expected to test the patience of lakhs of motorists using Hebbal junction. The area is already witnessing multiple infrastructure projects, including the construction of Blue Line of Namma Metro, double-decker flyover proposed along with the Orange Line Metro corridor and the suburban rail project. This apart, the proposed Red Line of Metro also goes via Mehkri Circle and veterinary college and terminates at Hebbal.

Tunnel road can help cross junction in 2 mins: Min

The minister is confident that the project will be completed on time."This project will ease traffic. Countries such as the United States and Japan have built tunnels, and even Mumbai has an undersea tunnel. I do not understand why there is opposition here when similar infrastructure works have not faced such resistance elsewhere."

He added the tunnel has been designed for a speed of 60kmph. "Once the tunnel is operational, motorists will be able to cross the Hebbal stretch in two minutes. At present, the same journey can take up to 30 minutes during peak hours," he said.

Two fire at advocate near farmhouse over land issue

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: An advocate from the city sustained injuries after two farmers fired at him with an unlicensed rifle in Sundaghatta village, Ramanagara, Friday morning. The injured advocate, CN Mohan, was visiting his farmhouse on the outskirts of the village when the shots were fired.

Two accused farmers, identified as Shivanna and Nagaraj, have been arrested on attempt-to-murder charges and have also been booked under Arms Act.

Initially, police thought Mohan had stepped on a crude bomb and sustained injuries when it exploded. "Local poachers have the habit of placing homemade crude bombs at places where forest animals frequently pass. When we checked the spot and Mohan's injuries on his back and leg, we realised pellets were fired at him from a long range," an officer said.

A senior officer said Shivanna and Nagaraj were upset with Mohan over a land-related dispute. "His farmhouse and neighbouring agricultural lands are interconnected with a pathway. There were differences between Mohan and the accused over using the pathway. Shivanna and Nagaraj decided to frighten Mohan by firing from the rifle," he said.

A spot mahazar with the accused showed they had fired at Mohan after hiding behind a bush. "The range was over 30 feet and that's why the pellets scattered on reaching Mohan. After firing at him, the farmers ran back to their houses," police said.

Cows lock horns with shoppers and motorists; owners in trouble

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Bengaluru: The persistent menace of stray cattle blocking busy roads has now led to legal action, with City Market traffic police filing a case against unidentified owners of cows that disrupted traffic and endangered commuters near the bustling Market Circle on SJP Road and adjoining roads.

Police said the cattle frequently blocked roads, fought with each other and charged at people trying to drive them away, posing a serious accident risk.

Sub-inspector Henry Madhan said he was on traffic duty at Market Circle on June 11 when around 12 stray cows were found standing in the middle of the road during evening peak hours.

Pic for representation

12 stray cows were found standing in the middle of the road during peak hours at KR Market

Police said the cattle repeatedly wandered onto footpaths and attempted to feed on fruits and vegetables displayed by vendors along SJP Road, near Jamia Masjid and Kothambari Mandi.

Whenever vendors tried to chase them away, the cows charged at them and created panic in the crowded marketplace, cops said.

With large numbers of shoppers visiting KR Market every day, police feared the situation could result in injuries or even major accidents. Officials noted the stray cattle were rounded up and shifted to shelters on several occasions. However, their owners reclaimed the animals and allowed them to roam freely on public roads again, causing repeated inconvenience and danger.

Based on Madhan's complaint, police first registered an NCR on the same day and, after obtaining permission from 5th ACJM Court, registered a case under BNS Section 270 (public nuisance) on June 23.

Nagendra threatened Ramya with knife to take cab with him, says roommate

▶ Continued from page 1

An argument broke out between Nagendra and Ramya at the latter's rented accommodation. Ramya's roommate Nayana later told police that Nagendra threatened Ramya with a knife, saying he would kill both of them if she refused to accompany him.

Friend alerted police

Nagendra then booked a cab to Ankola, and the pair left Bengaluru around 11am. Fearing for Ramya's safety, Nayana, meanwhile, alerted police, who tracked the cab through CCTV footage and contacted the driver, Praveen. When officers learnt the vehicle was nearing Kallambella in Sira taluk, about 90km from Bengaluru, they instructed the driver to stop at the nearest police station or highway patrol.

TOI

THE BURNING CAR

Police said Nagendra overheard the conversation, became agitated and allegedly told Ramya, "Let's die together". He then pulled out what are being suspected to be crude bombs and stabbed Ramya with a knife.

Forensic experts to determine nature of explosives

As the commotion continued inside the vehicle, Praveen pulled up by the roadside, and he and Ramya managed to flee. Seconds later, an explosion ripped through the car, killing Nagendra on the spot and setting the vehicle ablaze. Ramya sustained injuries in the attack and is undergoing treatment.

Tumakuru SP Ashok KV said forensic experts were examining the scene to determine the nature of the explosive and establish the exact cause of the blast.

Six number plates, 12 vehicles: 2 land in custody over registration fraud

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Bengaluru: A routine police patrol led to the exposure of a vehicle registration fraud after officers spotted two Swaraj Mazda minibuses plying on the road with the same registration number.

Further investigation uncovered a larger racket, with police seizing 12 minibuses and arresting two individuals allegedly involved in the scam. The arrested are Syed Nazir, 40, a resident of Subhashnagar in Electronics City, and Nagaraj, 52, who lives in Anekal and is a native of Tamil Nadu.

On June 23, head constable Kedaraling Tambe and constable Keshavamurthy, attached to Electronics City police station, were on patrol on Manipal County Road when a speeding Swaraj Mazda minibus overtook their motorcycle. Tambe noticed its registration number as KA-51-B-5959. Barely a minute later, another Swaraj Mazda minibus sped past — and to his surprise, it too displayed the same registration number.

AI

This appears to be a larger racket, and several others may be involved in similar activities. RTO officials need to take serious note of the modus operandi
Police officer

Tambe and Keshavamurthy followed the vehicles for 1.5km and intercepted them near Begur Lake Road. During questioning, Nazir admitted that both vehicles belonged to him and confessed to using the same number on both. He had paid taxes for only one vehicle and affixed the same number to the other to evade govt dues.

A case was registered under Section 318 (cheating) of BNS. Inspector Azheruddin and his team found that Nazir is a heavy vehicle mechanic who used to take scrap vehicles and remove the parts to use them for other vehicles.

Nazir told police that Nagaraj, a transporter, allegedly provided the registration numbers of genuine buses matching the make and model of Nazir's vehicles. Using those details, Nazir allegedly created forged registration documents and deployed the minibuses to ferry employees of garment factories.

Police said Nagaraj charged a commission for each registration number and forged document. Based on Nazir's statement and the subsequent investigation, Nagaraj was arrested.

Nazir used to save on road tax, registration tax, passenger vehicle tax (based on seating capacity), and fitness certificate charges by using the numbers provided by Nagaraj, a police officer said.

Police have seized 12 vehicles, including Swaraj Mazda, Mahindra and Eicher minibuses, from the accused.

Nazir and Nagaraj have been remanded in judicial custody.

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Caught in pipeline: Credai pushes for faster approvals to cut red tape

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Bengaluru: Even as the govt promotes vertical growth to meet rising urban housing demand, developers say prolonged approval delays and procedural bottlenecks continue to hamper project execution and affect home deliveries.

Over the past few months, Karnataka has relaxed occupancy certificate (OC) norms, first exempting residential buildings on plots of up to 1,200 sqft from the mandatory OC requirement for electricity connections, and later extending the exemption to plots of up to 2,400 sqft, provided they have approved building plans and meet basic compliance requirements. The state has also been pushing for faster, system-driven online approvals to reduce delays in building plan sanctions.

Despite these reforms, builders contend that many projects continue to face uncertainty and delays in obtaining OCs, with larger developments often encountering longer processing timelines.

Credai Karnataka has approached the chief minister and minister for urban development, urging measures to address delays in approvals that are affecting housing projects across the state.

> What the sector now needs is a truly integrated single-window clearance mechanism that brings all approvals under one umbrella. If approvals can be consolidated and processed within a three-month timeframe, it would be transformative for the industry. Developers incur significant holding costs and reducing approval timelines could lower overall project costs by at least 15-20%
> **Vivek Garg** | FOUNDING DIRECTOR, NVT QUALITY LIFESTYLE

> The new system has done little to improve approval timelines. Delays affect every stage of a project, disrupting planning and cost estimates. Occupancy certificates are often delayed, which in turn holds up electricity connections and possession of homes. This impacts buyers' finances as well as their schooling and relocation plans. The only solution is a faster, more streamlined approval process
> **Kiran Venugopal** | MD & CEO, BRICKS AND MILESTONES

> A better streamlined and predictable approval process will benefit everyone involved. Developers are not seeking special concessions but greater clarity and consistency in sanctions, occupancy certificates and related approvals. Reducing delays and simplifying procedures will also support the state's broader urban development goals
> **Anuj Sanjay Jain** | DIRECTOR, SNN BUILDERS

> Streamlining these processes, reducing duplication and introducing accountability in approvals will improve ease-of-doing business without compromising regulatory oversight. At the same time, enforcement should focus on preventing genuinely illegal developments rather than creating procedural hurdles for compliant projects. A more efficient and predictable system would benefit developers, homebuyers and the broader growth of the city
> **Ramani Sastri** | CMD, STERLING DEVELOPERS

File photo

Bhaskar T Nagendrappa, president of Credai Karnataka chapter, said: "The Town Planning Act mandates monthly local planning authority meetings to clear approvals, but delays of several months in cities like Ballari and Mysuru are disrupting project sanctions, delaying home deliveries, and causing hardship to builders and homebuyers. We raised the issue with the ministers, who assured positive consideration and asked us to submit a detailed representation, which will be submitted next week."

Builders told **TOI** that issues such as e-khata delays, contradictory rules creating procedural deadlocks, irregular planning meetings, and delays in sanctions and occupancy certificates are affecting cash flow and investor confidence.

They also flagged lengthy NOCs, conditional clearances from utility agencies and prolonged approvals from departments such as fire services, pollution control and civil aviation, and called for fixed timelines, streamlined processes and better coordination to support vertical growth and timely project delivery.

A builder said: "Development approvals shifting from BDA to GBA and frequent by-law changes have delayed sanctions, forcing redraws and resubmissions. Six of my projects in Jakkur, Electronics City and Sarjapur Road are pending for six months which earlier used to be done in 15 days to two months."

After stiff opposition, K'taka to roll out G RAM G on July 1

Times News Network

Bengaluru: After strongly opposing the Centre's VB-G RAM G Act and challenging it in court, Karnataka govt has decided to implement the new rural employment guarantee scheme from July 1, citing the need to protect rural livelihoods despite the additional financial burden on the state.

Since the Centre announced the replacement of MGNREGA with Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin), Karnataka had led the opposition against it. The state cabinet rejected the Act in Jan, terming it a violation of the right to livelihood and the constitutional powers of panchayats. The state also moved Supreme Court and demanded restoration of the earlier funding pattern.

Now, following Karnataka's decision to implement VB-G RAM G scheme, other non-BJP ruled states have adopted varied approaches. Punjab, after initially passing a unanimous assembly resolution opposing the repeal of MGNREGA, has notified the new scheme.

Telangana, which is opposing the new law in its current form, is planning to hold consultations with CMs of non-BJP governed states, especially Karnataka and Kerala, to assess whether they would be willing to pursue a common legal strategy to protect their interests.

Rural development and panchayat raj minister Eshwar Khandre said govt decided to implement the scheme in the interest of rural residents, women and other vulnerable sections. The proposal has already been approved by chief minister DK Shivakumar, he said.

Under MGNREGA, the Centre shared expenditure with states in 90:10 ratio. Under VB-G RAM G, the ratio has been revised to 60:40, significantly increasing financial burden on states.

Khandre said Karnataka will continue its legal challenge while urging the Centre to restore at least 80:20 funding ratio. He slammed the provision barring employment for 60 days during the agricultural season, calling it "unscientific" as mechanisation has reduced farm jobs. The state will raise the issue at the meeting of state rural development ministers in Delhi Sunday.

Puttur artist wins logo contest

Mangaluru: Brand identity designer and illustrator from Puttur, **Ramprasad K**, will be felicitated in New Delhi Monday after his design for the logo design competition for Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin): VB-G RAM G Act, 2025 was declared the winner.

Ramprasad told **TOI** he initially had no intention of participating in the contest. However, with just a week left for the submission deadline, he created 10–15 logo designs, but was not satisfied with any of them. Ramprasad had almost given up when, to his surprise, the deadline was extended by four days.

On the final day, with barely 10 minutes left for the contest to close, he designed a simple logo. "The concept focused on Viksit Bharat as the central theme, highlighting employment generation as its core value. I am extremely surprised that this design was selected," the artist said. TNN

Govt schools delay transfer certificates to retain students

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Bengaluru: Govt schools in the state are unable to generate transfer certificates for their students, leaving children who want to change institutions in a fix. The school education department said they have deliberately kept the process administratively difficult so that children stay in govt schools.

The schools say they usually were able to generate transfer certificates, latest by the second week of June. However, this year, there have been no updates from the department yet.

"Our students have been waiting for TCs. We have a case of a student who wants to get transferred to Koramangala because her single mother has found a better job there. While the new school has sent a request for TC, we are

unable to generate one. The new school has refused to let her sit in class as the formalities aren't completed. The child is sitting at home for three weeks," said a teacher from a govt school in east Bengaluru.

A headmistress said the issue also results in problems in providing resources like midday meals and books. "While the SATS show a certain number of students, we have more students who have come in without TCs. We are spending from our pockets to get more resources for them like eggs," she said.

The schools said the move is so that the govt can show high enrolment in its schools, and thus, the feature to allow TCs is disabled until admission time is over.

"In the past, we noticed that students are lured by aided and unaided schools. To get more students is a matter of aid for aided schools and fees for the unaided ones. But they are qualitatively very poor. Govt schools for sure have better teachers and facilities than many budget private schools," said an official from the school education department.

Commissioner of school education, Vikas Kishor Suralkar, said: "We have deliberately kept the issuing of transfer certificate a difficult task for students who were admitted to school for the current academic year due to administrative reasons. In the better interest of students, it is important that the children stay with govt schools," he said.

Deported Thai woman alleges ₹18L apmt theft

Times News Network

Bengaluru: A Thai national who was living illegally in the city alleged that valuables worth over Rs 18 lakh were stolen from her rented apartment after she entrusted its keys to an acquaintance while she was lodged at a detention centre.

The complaint was filed by her friend, Saurabh Gain of Yelahanka New Town, on behalf of Tattnan Kanpakapong alias Thanista Sakdawichit, 38, a Thai citizen who was residing at Sai Sumukha Sterling Apartments on Dasarahalli Main Road before being detained and later deported.

According to the complaint, before being taken into custody, Tattnan handed over the apartment keys to a man identified as Usman, asking him to clean and secure the premises during her absence. She later alleged that Usman, in collusion with his acquaintance Farha Jabeen and house owner Chimbili Amarnath, removed valuables and household articles worth Rs 18.1 lakh from the house.

The complainant further alleged that Usman retained the Rs 40,000 paid as advance for the flat and refused to return it.

Amruthahally police registered a case of cheating and criminal intimidation. An officer said Tattnan, who was deported from India, recently sent an email complaint following which her friend lodged the case. Notices will be issued to the accused and necessary action taken.

Police raided Tattnan's rented house on March 18. She was lodged in a detention centre and later deported. Investigators found that Amarnath, 35, had rented the house to Tattnan without submitting C-form to police.

BJP panel submits cross-voting report, keeps findings secret

Times News Network

Bengaluru: Karnataka BJP Saturday submitted its internal report on cross-voting during the recent legislative council polls, but kept its findings confidential, leaving the next course of action to the party leadership.

Senior MLC **CT Ravi**, who headed the three-member committee, said the report, prepared after a four-day inquiry, identifies areas where the party should have exercised greater internal caution.

"Party president Vijayendra had constituted a three-member internal fact-finding committee comprising me, state vice-president N Mahesh and MLA Mahesh Tenginakayi. He directed us to conduct an internal inquiry and submit the report at the earliest," Ravi said after submitting the report to Vijayendra. "Accordingly, we completed the inquiry within four days and after discussions among the three of us, submitted the report, which contains findings on which all three members agreed," he added.

Ravi said the committee spoke to BJP candidates, JD(S) functionaries, leader of the opposition, the opposition chief whip and others after preparing a list of those who came under suspicion based on media reports and other information.

Refusing to reveal the findings, Ravi said, "Since it is an internal inquiry report submitted to the state president, it would be inappropriate to disclose further details." He also declined to say whether the report identified those responsible for cross-voting during the legislative council polls.

Ravi said, "There were 12 instances of cross-voting by NDA legislators. BJP lost four votes, including one invalid. Thirty votes each had been allocated to BJP's two candidates."One candidate received 29 votes, with one vote declared invalid, while the other received 27 votes, three fewer than expected. JD(S) should have received 22 votes but got only 14, an eight-vote shortfall," he added.

Rejecting the suggestions that Congress gained support because of its popularity, Ravi alleged the ruling party had engineered the cross-voting through "unethical means".

"When cross-voting happened in other states, Congress said it was against democratic values. By encouraging cross-voting, you too have undermined democracy and have no moral right to question cross-voting in other states," he said.

Don't acquire land by coercion: HDK

▶ Continued from page 1

Backing the protesters, Kumaraswamy accused the Congress govt of pushing ahead with the project without obtaining the consent of affected farmers.

"Land acquisition cannot be carried out by force, fear or intimidation," the former CM said, demanding an immediate halt to any coercive acquisition.

He questioned why govt was targeting fertile agricultural land when large tracts of vacant govt land were available elsewhere.

Kumaraswamy also criticised heavy police deployment and prohibitory orders around the protest venue, alleging that the administration was trying to stifle dissent instead of engaging with the villagers.

"This is not a fight against DK Shivakumar. It is a fight to protect the rights of farmers," he said, adding that he had no objection to the township if landowners willingly gave up their land.

Earlier, Kumaraswamy invited Shivakumar to Byramangala for a public debate, rejecting the CM's proposal to hold talks at Vidhana Soudha. He argued that the issue could not be resolved within the confines of the state secretariat and said he was even willing to meet at the CM's official residence, Krishna, if all the protesting farmers were allowed to join the discussion.

Urging farmers not to part with their land, Kumaraswamy cited the long-pending rehabilitation of those displaced by the NICE road project. He claimed around 4,000 farmers were still awaiting the developed sites promised to them as part of the compensation package.

Vehicle kills 4-year-old leopard in Mysuru dist

Mysuru: A four-year-old leopard was killed on the spot after being hit by an unidentified vehicle near Arabithittu Wildlife Sanctuary off Hunsur Friday evening, said Hunsur territorial forest deputy conservator of forests (DCF) RT Kirubananthan.

Forest officials recovered the carcass of the animal and disposed it of in accordance with guidelines after completing formal procedures, Kirubananthan told **TOI**.

CASE REGISTERED

A case has been registered and the Hunsur range forest officer has been appointed the investigation officer, the DCF said.

According to foresters of the area, the animal was crossing the road from the protected forest region of Arabithittu to the opposite side when a speeding vehicle travelling from Hunsur to Mysuru hit it. TNN

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12 NOON TO 1:30 PM
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3 PM
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Europe trip derailed, couple wins ₹5L over botched honeymoon package

Vindhya.Pabolu
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For the trip to France, Switzerland and Italy, the firm had assured assistance, including visa processing support. But the visa applications were rejected by the embassy, citing that the stated purpose of travel and conditions of stay were not found to be reliable

Bengaluru: A couple's dream honeymoon through France, Switzerland and Italy turned into a legal battle after their Europe tour package booked with MakeMyTrip (India) Pvt Ltd allegedly fell apart due to deficient visa assistance and the company's refusal to issue a refund.

The Bangalore I Additional District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission ruled in favour of the Bengaluru couple, holding MakeMyTrip and its officials jointly and severally liable for deficiency in service. The commission directed the travel platform to refund the entire tour package amount, along with applicable interest and litigation costs.

The saga began when the couple, Afreen Hafiz and Syed Asadulla from Nelamangala, planned a honeymoon trip to France, Switzerland and Italy between Nov 18 and Nov 30, 2023. On Sept 18, they approached MakeMyTrip representatives for a "Harmonious Europe (Europamundo)" package tour of 12 nights and 13 days, priced at Rs 4.9 lakh for both.

Afreen stated that through continuous WhatsApp and email exchanges, the firm assured them of complete assistance, including visa processing support, documentation guidance, itinerary planning, hotel bookings, flight arrangements, food and leisure activities, and overall end-to-end coordination for the Europe tour. The company also claimed responsibility for assisting in obtaining the Schengen visa and shared detailed itinerary information covering accommodation and travel plans.

On Sept 22, the couple made an initial payment of Rs 88,808 through UPI transfer. On Oct 15, Afreen paid Rs 2.6 lakh, followed by another payment of Rs 1.3 lakh on Oct 16 and also redeemed a gift card worth Rs 16,579 on the same day. The excluding visa charges of Rs 20,678 were paid separately as advised by the company. The payments were acknowledged through invoices.

On Sept 27, the travel operator allegedly approved the visa application process and instructed the couple to proceed as per guidance for submission before Switzerland embassy. Between Sept 25 and Oct 4, the firm shared visa-related requirements, checklists, appointment details, hotel bookings, flight tickets through email, which were acknowledged by the complainant.

CONSUMER IS KING

They submitted a visa application before the Embassy of Switzerland. However, on Oct 25 the visa applications were rejected by the embassy on the ground that the information submitted regarding justification for the purpose and conditions of stay was not reliable. They issued grievance emails and a legal notice seeking refund (excluding visa charges). With no response they filed a consumer complaint on Oct 4, 2024. MakeMyTrip denied all allegations and argued that visa rejection was solely the discretion of the embassy and not attributable to any lapse on its part. It stated that the booking was non-refundable and that vendor costs and cancellation penalties had already been incurred.

The company also maintained that it had acted only as a facilitator for visa assistance and could not be held responsible for rejection by the embassy. It also contended that expenses had already been incurred towards hotels and its European tour partner Europamundo Vacaciones, including cancellation penalties.

The commission observed that while visa issuance lies entirely within the prerogative of foreign embassies, travel operators offering international tour packages are bound to exercise due care and diligence in assisting customers.

It held that MakeMyTrip failed to act with sufficient diligence in facilitating visa process, resulting in deficiency in service. It rejected the company's argument that incurred costs justified withholding refund, noting that internal vendor expenses cannot override consumer rights when service deficiency is established.

The firm and its directors must refund Rs 4.9 lakh to the couple and pay Rs 2,000 towards litigation costs.

Assn says Kannada can't be third language in Karnataka

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Associated Management of Primary and Secondary Schools in Karnataka (KAMS) has raised objections against National Council for Education Research Training (NCERT) releasing a Kannada textbook (R3) for Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE) schools.

The book, named Krishna, is already in the eye of a storm for its name and alleged favouritism towards vegetarianism.

In its representation to the chairman of NCERT, the schools' association has pointed out that as per Kannada Language Learning Act 2015, Kannada can only be a first or second language in schools. The R3 book is, therefore, useless, they said.

NCERT BOOK ROW

Urging NCERT to withdraw the recent circular by CBSE to its affiliated schools relating to mandatory third language in Karnataka, it said the circular has resulted in serious legal ambiguity, administrative confusion and practical difficulties across Karnataka schools.

D Shashi Kumar, general secretary of the association, said: "Technically, it is impossible to implement Kannada as third language in CBSE schools. CBSE should clarify whether English is a foreign language or a regional one. In our opinion, English should be considered a regional language as it is extensively used in all walks of life, ranging from judiciary to legislature."

Bus fare hike under review, says minister

Bengaluru: Transport minister Byrathi Suresh said a revision in bus fares is under consideration in view of rising fuel prices, spare parts costs and overall operational expenses. However, he clarified that no formal proposal has yet been submitted to govt by the transport department.

He said the four state transport corporations have collectively incurred losses of around Rs 5,000 crore due to increased operating costs. He said a decision on fare revision will be taken after weighing both commuter interests and financial health of the transport corporations.During earlier presentations, the corporations had suggested a fare hike of around 24% to offset escalating costs, he added. TNN

Producer's son dies of cardiac arrest at Kodachadri hills

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Shivamogga: A 28-year-old Bengalurean, Ullas Gowda, died after collapsing at Kodachadri hills in Shivamogga district Saturday.

Ullas is the son of film producer and former Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce (KFCC) president Ba Ma Harish. He had travelled to Kodachadri with 13 friends from Bengaluru in a Tempo Traveller. The group stayed at a private homestay in Hosanagara taluk and took a jeep to the hilltop, up to Sarvajna Peetha. The incident occurred during their return journey. While walking down near the temple atop the hill, Ullas collapsed after suffering a cardiac arrest.

Shivamogga SP B Nikhil told **TOI** the incident took place around 11.30am. "Ullas collapsed after returning from Sarvajna Peetha atop the hill, where one has to walk at least a kilometre. Later, his friends brought him by a jeep to Nagara hospital, where he was declared brought dead. We have requested his relatives to be present for the postmortem," the SP said.

Friends and residents carried Ullas from the hill and took him to Hosanagara taluk hospital, but he is learnt to have died on the way.

Ullas had got engaged a few months ago, and his wedding was scheduled for Dec. His family in Bengaluru has been informed.

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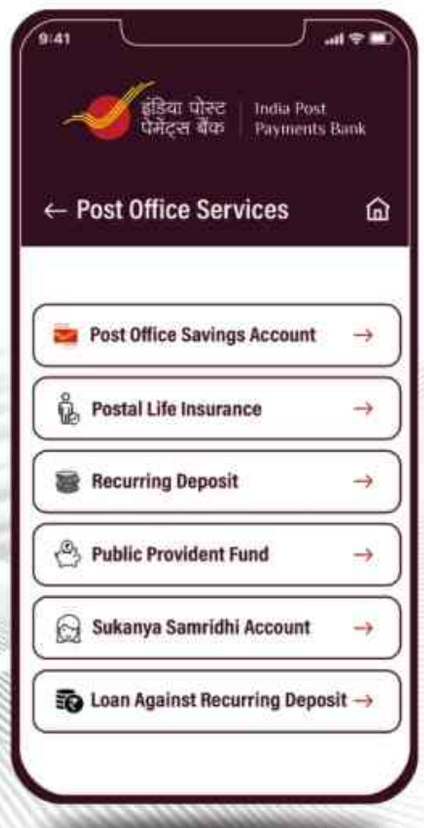

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SHRI U.T. KHADER
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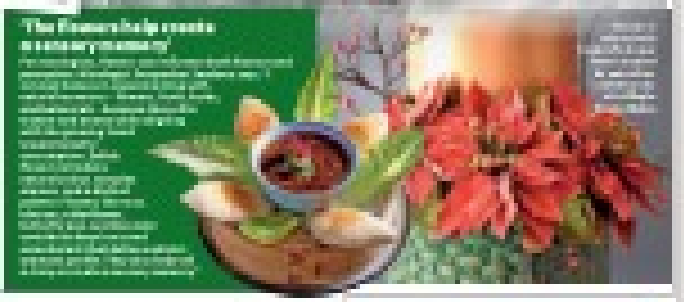
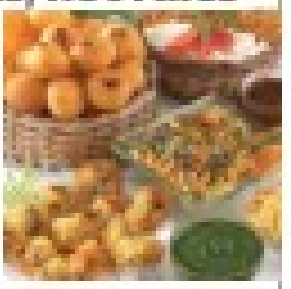


Make snacks, not rules

POV



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SITE For Sale 40X60, S/F, Adarsh Nagar Layout, 30ft Road, Arishinakunte,Good location,5200/- per Sqft, Negotiable, Contact 7026500097

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FORWARD SALE : 2.57 Acres Commercially converted Land suitable for Hospital and Hotel on Old Madras Road. Corner Property 250ft Road Facing. Close to Bren Starlight. Direct Land Owner. Ph: 95133 30567.

PEENYA

5454 sft North-East corner shed on 60ft road with 40HP power on Andrahalli main road, Peenya 2nd stage. KSSIDC 1st allottee. Brokers strictly excuse. Rs. 9 crores. Direct Owner: 9686111709

28,000 sqft. WAREHOUSE AVAILABLE for LEASE
Seegehalli, Magadi Road, Adjacent to BDA, New Outer Ring Road

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Call : S.V. Nagaraj - 9886522755

RAJAJI NAGAR

PURVA BLUBELLE RAJAJINAGAR Adjacent to Magadi Rd Metro Station 3BHK / 5BHK Luxurious 7 Star Amenities/Servantroom.Structure Completed, Finishing Started. Handover by MAY 2027.Only few Units left.100% Vastu. Contact-OWNER : 98440 27560.

3BHK, Pre-launched 2000 Sqft Luxury High end Flat for Sale, Rajajinagar main road near Navrang theatre. Phone 8088330330, www.govianu.com

RAJARAJESHWARI NAGAR

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RMV EXTENSION

SALE 30x50 BDA North Face 3 BHK House 35Ft Road Off Bel Road RMV, Price 35k Per Sqft Final Brokers Excuse Direct Buyer Call 9844009992

RT NAGAR

COMMERCIAL building for sale 4950 sqft g/f super market 2nd floor gym rental income 6 to 7 lakh near Sriram apartments Hebbal Contact 9448046717

SANJAY NAGAR

FOR SALE 50X80
EXCELLENT COMMERCIAL / RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY IN SANJAYNAGAR

PRIME LOCATION Propty Suitable for Comm Complex, Indpendent Bungalows & Highend Apartments. 99868 64000

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SARJAPURA Main Rd 3 km 3 Acre residential conversion land 40 ft rd, Chikka Tirupati near 4 acre 40ft rd for one acre sale price, 4.50 cr M: 99452 63249

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2 km from Cubbon Park
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Bank Loan Available.
Call-9844735031

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SALE BDA 40x60 2 adjacent 5 BHK Duplex House S & SE Corner 4.5 Crores Each. Chikkalasandra- Ramanjaneya Layout. Contact: 98808-36063

WHITEFIELD

99-LAKHS for 4 BHK Duplex Villa near Whitefield! BMRDA approved, 4-acre community, 12 km from Hope Farm. Call : 99808 77447 / 91132 35589

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3BHK, 1500sqft Luxury High end Flat for Sale, OC received, in YESHWANTPUR. For details Contact: 8088330330 www.govianu.com

ESTATE & PROPERTIES

SALE: Coffee Plantation on National Highway with commercial conversion. Between Sakleshpura to Dharmasthala Road. Contact: 99456 03806

FOR SALE

BANGALORE

PRIME 9,000 sq. feet vacant corner plot for sale on Haralur Main Road with over 70 ft frontage, BBMP A-khata and clear titles. Strong commercial or mixed-use potential. Rate: 25,000/sft. Contact: 74833 08896

1200 SQFT, ABHIVRUDDHI SSR CITY, UTTARI, OFF KANAKPURA ROAD (NEAR ART OF LIVING ASHRAM), EXPECTING 30L, WHATSAPP ONLY 8884573484

HMT-LAYOUT Nagasandra Allotment site for Sale BBMP 'A' Khata North near Metro, CHRIST University and Highway 9945229737/9740092367

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Land available beside Mysore–Bangalore New Express Highway, 6 kms from Manipal Hospital.

SUITABLE FOR All Commercial Businesses. Excellent Investment. Interested Parties, Contact. 7348831599

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FOR SALE
THUBINAKERE
NEAR MANDYA DISTRICT

KIADB INDUSTRIAL Land 22000 Sqft Land For Sale, Near Mandya District Thubinakere, Contact: 9341223561

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2b. 14,000 sft land in K. R. Extension.
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Buyers Call : 9241570047

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A) 15000SQFT TUDA approved site, Jaganathpura Tumkur B) 1200 SQFT TUDA site Belagumba Tumkur, 200mtrs from NH4. 8088330330

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COMMERCIAL retail space for sale at Yelahanka, with tenant paying 3L per flr, 3000 sqft luxury one floor one unit 100% flr office space sale: 8088330330

COMMERCIAL retail space sale- Sahakar nagar, tenant paying 2.5L per flr, 2500 sqft luxury one floor one unit 100% flr office space: 8088330330

COMMERCIAL retail space for sale with tenant paying 3L per flr, 3200sqft, Yeshwanthpur nr Kia showrm, one flr one unit 100% flr office space: 8088330330

COMMERCIAL Land for Sale in Magadi Road near to NICE Road. Suitable for Industries/ Ware House. Contact : 99456 03806

CAMBRIDGE MG Road Near Fully Furnished AC Guest house CCP, Lift, 100% Power Backup. 2150 sqft, 2.6cr. 97407 14511

For Rent Avenue Road & Jumma Masjid Road Corner Prime Property 2nd Floor 2250 Sfts Suitable for Whole Sale & Retail Business Contact 98450 58598/ 98807 22522

FARMS

3.08 Guntha's farm land for sale @ Yamare, Sajapura . This plot is near to Prestige Eaton Park Sarjapur Contact No. 9845532413

INDUSTRIAL PREMISES

REQUIRED industrial shed for rent in or around Peenya with 30 hp power & preferably with crane facility measuring 5000 to 7000 sq ft for immediate occupation. Kindly contact Zoher on 9448051537.

SALE Yeswanthpura BDA Industrial land 22000 sqft near Goraguntapalya Metro Station west facing. Reasonable Price Srinivas 9342842978, 9880743366

RENT Warehouse 50,000 sqft to 2,00,000 Lakhs sqft, G+4 each floor 30000 sqft Aerospace Park Davanahalli. Call Srinivas 9342842978, 9880743366

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FOR RENT 2BHK 1st Floor 6th Block Koramangala, contact 9845073898.

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AUDITED BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 2026

(Amt in Rs.)

CAPITAL AND LIABILITIES	As at 31-03-2026	As at 31-03-2025
Capital	35,09,61,250	35,67,55,225
Reserve Fund & Other Reserves	3,08,58,34,807	3,26,41,46,630
Profit & Loss Account	1,80,19,175	- 24,35,30,792
Deposits and Other Accounts	10,23,23,73,858	9,13,25,68,247
Overdue Interest Reserve	3,62,21,55,237	3,37,43,29,166
Penal Interest on Loans	2,49,800	1,58,650
Interest Payable	5,56,07,662	5,52,76,175
Other Liabilities	35,65,60,978	24,07,36,367
TOTAL	**17,72,17,62,766**	**16,18,04,39,669**

PROPERTY AND ASSETS	As at 31-03-2026	As at 31-03-2025
Cash & Bank Balances	2,05,77,26,072	1,36,48,76,370
Balance with Other Banks	2,85,89,61,746	2,28,10,31,227
Investments	3,24,42,89,425	3,24,46,23,952
Advances	5,17,41,58,317	5,15,14,27,339
Interest Receivables:		
a) Interest on Investment	4,57,80,090	5,01,70,573
b) Interest on Loans and Advances	3,62,21,55,237	3,37,43,29,166
c) Interest accrued on Standared Assets	2,97,00,624	3,23,33,212
d) Penal Interest on Loans	2,49,800	1,58,650
Property, Plant & Equipment -	54,40,52,250	54,56,11,194
Other Assets	13,99,62,512	13,10,56,129
Deferred Tax Assets	45,46,517	46,16,679
Branch Adjustment Account	1,80,177	2,05,177
TOTAL	**17,72,17,62,766**	**16,18,04,39,669**

AUDITED PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2026

(Amt in Rs.)

PARTICULARS	As at 31-03-2026	As at 31-03-2025
INCOME:		
Interest Income	43,44,99,778	60,12,56,284
Income from Investments	47,10,16,823	41,02,47,123
Other Income	6,54,70,538	3,27,26,225
Forfeiture Income	4,79,75,000	-
Provision writeback	24,35,30,792	-
Total	**1,26,24,92,931**	**1,04,42,29,633**
EXPENDITURE:		
Interest Paid	67,52,36,344	62,27,30,270
Employee Benefit Expenses	11,82,91,330	11,94,88,279
Administrative Expenses	7,41,26,753	6,93,35,604
Depreciation	72,14,417	72,47,663
Provisions & Write Offs	-	6,00,00,000
Total	**87,48,68,845**	**87,88,01,816**
Profit before Tax for the year	38,76,24,086	16,54,27,817
Less: Income Tax:		
(a) Current Tax	2,81,09,182	4,85,00,000
(b) Short provision made for 31.03.2024	-	3,35,069
(c) Deferred Tax	(70,162)	(9,49,605)
Profit after Tax	**35,94,44,742**	**11,56,43,143**
APPROPRIATIONS:		
Transfer to statutory reerves	8,98,61,186	-
Transfer to Karnataka State Cooperative Federation @ 2%	53,91,671	-
Transfer to Karnataka State Urban Bank's Federation @ 1%	26,41,919	-
Balance carried over to balance sheet	**26,15,49,967**	**-**

DISCLOSURE ON FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - 'NOTES TO ACCOUNTS' AS ON 31.03.2026

In accordance with the guidelines issued by the RBI vide their Circular No. RBI/DOR/2021-22/83 DOR.ACC.REC. No.45/21.04.018/2021-22 dated 30.08.2021, the following information is provided as 'Notes to Accounts' as annexure to Balance Sheet.

1. Regulatory Capital : a) Composition of Regulatory Capital (Amount in ₹ crores)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Current Year 2025-26	Previous Year 2024-25
i)	Common Equity Tier 1 capital (CET 1)* / Paid up share capital and reserves (net of deductions, if any)	35.10	35.68
ii)	Additional Tier 1 capital*/ Other Tier 1 capital	68.15	34.79
iii)	Tier 1 capital (i+ii)	103.25	70.47
iv)	Tier 2 capital	26.53	24.99
v)	Total capital (Tier 1+Tier 2)	129.78	95.46
vi)	Total Risk Weighted Assets (RWAs)	431.37	387.42
vii)	CET 1 Ratio (CET 1 as a percentage of RWAs)* / Paid-up share capital and reserves as percentage of RWAs	8.14%	9.21%
Viii)	Tier 1 Ratio (Tier 1 capital as a percentage of RWAs)	23.94%	18.19%
ix)	Tier 2 Ratio (Tier 2 capital as a percentage of RWAs)	6.15%	6.45%
x)	Capital to Risk Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) (Total Capital as a percentage of RWA	30.09%	24.64%

b. Draw down from Reserves : Rs. 27.35 crores was drawn down from BDDR and Investment Depreciation Reserves.

2. Asset liability management : a) Maturity pattern of certain items of assets and liabilities (Amount in ₹ crores)

	Day 1	2 to 7 Days	8 to 14 Days	15 to 30 Days	31 Days to 2 Months	Over 2 months and to 3 Months	Over 3 months and up to 6 months	Over 6 months and up to 1year	Over 1 year and up to 3Years	Over 3 years and up to 5 Years	Over 5 years	Total
Deposits	4.97	7.77	6.84	16.73	36.12	27.97	85.84	157.23	450.79	220.88	8.1	**1023.24**
Advances	86.68	0.79	0.14	0.50	2.51	2.07	9.99	17.71	90.88	91.09	215.06	**517.42**
Investments	-	-	4.00	9.00	5.00	15.00	39.27	104.07	124.03	64.44	128.52	**493.32**
Borrowings	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

3. Investments: a) Composition of Investment Portfolio As at 31.03.2026 (current year balance sheet)

(Amount in ₹ crore)

	Investments in India							Investments outside India				
	Government Securities	Other Approved Securities	Shares	Debentures and Bonds	Subsidiaries and/or joint ventures	Others	Total investments in India	Government securities (including local authorities)	Subsidiaries and/or joint ventures	Others	Total Investments outside India	Total Investments
Held to Maturity												
Gross	220.91	0	0.30	0	0	0	221.21	0	0	0	0	221.21
Less: Provision for non- performing investments (NPI)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net	**220.91**	**0**	**0.30**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**221.21**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**221.21**
Available for Sale												
Gross	88.46	0	0	14.75	0	0	103.21	0	0	0	0	103.21
Less: Provision for depreciation and NPI	0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0	0
Net	**88.46**	**0**	**0**	**14.75**	**0**	**0**	**103.21**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**103.21**
Total Investments	**309.37**	**0**	**0.30**	**14.75**	**0**	**0**	**324.42**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**324.42**

As at 31.03.2025 (previous year balance sheet) (Amount in ₹ crore)

	Investments in India							Investments outside India				
	Government Securities	Other Approved Securities	Shares	Debentures and Bonds	Subsidiaries and/or joint ventures	Others	Total investments in India	Government securities (including local authorities)	Subsidiaries and/or joint ventures	Others	Total Investments outside India	Total Investments
Held to Maturity												
Gross	243.73	0	0.30	0	0	0	244.03	0	0	0	0	244.03
Less: Provision for non-performing investments (NPI)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net	**243.73**	**0**	**0.30**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**244.03**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**244.03**
Available for Sale												
Gross	75.68	0	0	4.75	0	0	80.43	0	0	0	0	80.43
Less: Provision for depreciation and NPI	0	0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0	0
Net	**75.68**	**0**	**0**	**4.75**	**0**	**0**	**80.43**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**80.43**
Total Investments	**319.41**	**0**	**0.30**	**4.75**	**0**	**0**	**324.46**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**324.46**

b) Movement of Provisions for Depreciation and Investment Fluctuation Reserve (Amount in ₹ crore)

Particulars	Current Year 2025-26	Previous Year 2024-25
i) Movement of provisions held towards depreciation on investments		
a) Opening Balance	5.81	7.44
b) Add: Provisions made during the year	-	-
c) Less: Write off / write back of excess provisions during the year	4.00	1.63
d) Closing balance	**1.81**	**5.81**
ii) Movement of Investment Fluctuation Reserve		
a) Opening balance	4.50	3.00
b) Add: Amount transferred during the year	1.00	1.50
c) Less: Drawdown	-	-
d) Closing balance	**5.50**	**4.50**
iii) Closing balance in IFR as a percentage of closing balance of investments in AFS and HFT/Current category	5.33%	5.59%

c) Sale and transfers to/from HTM category : Shifting of Government Securities worth of Rs. 11.98 crores from HTM to AFS dated 29.04.2025 and Rs. 34.77 crores shifted from AFS to HTM dated 29.04.2025.

d) Non-SLR investment portfolio : i) Non-performing non-SLR investments NIL

ii) Issuer composition of non-SLR investments (Amount in ₹ crore)

Sl. No.	Issuer	Amount		Extent of Private Placement		Extent of 'below investment grade' Securities		Extent of 'unrated Securities'		Extent of 'unlisted' securities.	
1	2	3		4		5		6		7	
		Current Year	Previous Year	Current Year	Previous Year	Current Year	Previous Year	Current Year	Previous Year	Current Year	Previous Year
a)	PSUs	14.75	4.75	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
b)	FIs	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
c)	Nationalized Banks	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
d)	Private Corporates	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
e)	Subsidiaries/ Joint Ventures	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
f)	Others	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
g)	Provision held towards depreciation	1.80	5.80	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
	Total	**16.55**	**10.55**	**Nil**	**Nil**	**Nil**	**Nil**	**Nil**	**Nil**	**Nil**	**Nil**

4. Asset Quality: a. Classification of advances and provisions held (Amount in ₹ crore)

	Standard	Non-Performing				Total
	Total Standard Advances	Sub-standard	Doubtful	Loss	Total Non-Performing Advances	
Gross Standard Advances and NPAs						
Opening Balance	308.69	1.60	177.38	27.47	206.45	515.14
Add: Additions during the year	152.26	2.90	0	0.81	2.66	
Less: Reductions during the year*/ Shift to Substandard	123.73	0.33	0.26	0.00	0.00	
Less: Shift to DBT from Sub-Standard in 2025/ DBT to Loss Assets		0.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Less: Partial Amount Recd but still substandard in 2025		0.03	5.65	0.15	0.00	
Less:Loan Account Closed/Repayment		0.65	18.09	4.24		
Closing balance	337.22	2.92	153.38	23.89	180.19	517.42
*Reductions in Gross NPAs due to:						
i) Upgradation	0.00	0.33	0.04	0	0.37	
ii) Recoveries (excluding recoveries from upgraded accounts) - Closed	0.00	0.64	18.08	4.24	22.96	
iii) Technical/ Prudential Write-offs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
iv) Write-offs other than those under (iii) above	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
					Provisions (excluding Floating provisions)	
Opening balance of provisions held	5.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	208.41	
Add: Fresh provisions made during the year	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Less: Excess provision reversed/ Write-off loans	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	24.35	
Closing balance of provisions held	5.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	184.06	
Net NPAs						
Opening Balance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-1.95	
Add: Fresh additions during the year	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Less: Reductions during the year	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.91	
Closing Balance					-3.86	

(Amount in ₹ crore)

	2025-26		2024-25	
a. Gross NPA	180.19	34.83%	206.46	40.08%
b. Net NPA	-3.86	-1.16	-1.95	-0.64%
Provision Coverage Ratio		102.14%		100.95%

b) Sector-wise Advances and Gross NPAs (Amount in ₹ crore)

Sl. No.	Sector*	Current Year (2025-26)			Previous Year (2024-25)		
		Outstanding Total Advances	Gross NPAs	Percentage of Gross NPAs to Total Advances in that sector	Outstanding Total Advances	Gross NPAs	Percentage of Gross NPAs to Total Advances in that sector
i)	**Priority Sector**						
a)	Agriculture and allied activities	3.91	3.91	100%	3.91	3.91	100%
b)	Advances to industries sector eligible as priority sector lending	128.96	51.78	40.15%	147.12	64.65	43.94%
c)	Services	-	-	-	-	-	-
d)	Personal loans	-	-	-	-	-	-
e)	Other Priority Sector	54.06	0.70	1.29%	51.36	0.89	1.73%
	Subtotal (i)	186.93	56.39	30.17%	202.39	69.45	34.31%
ii)	**Non-priority Sector**						
a)	Agriculture and allied activities	-	-	-	-	-	-
b)	Industry	46.13	46.13	100%	51.03	46.13	90.40%
c)	Services	-	-	-	-	-	-
d)	Personal loans	-	-	-	-	-	-
e)	Other Non-Priority Sector	284.36	77.67	27.31%	261.71	90.88	34.73%
	Sub-total (ii)	330.48	123.80		312.75	137.01	
	Total (i + ii)	517.41	180.19		515.14	206.46	

*Banks shall also disclose in the format above, sub-sectors where the outstanding advances exceeds 10 percent of the outstanding total advances to that sector. For instance, if a bank's outstanding advances to the mining industry exceed 10 percent of the outstanding total advances to 'Industry' sector it shall disclose details of its outstanding advances to mining separately in the format above under the 'Industry' sector.

c) Particulars of resolution plan and restructuring

i) Particulars of resolution plan - NA

ii) Details of accounts subjected to restructuring: - No accounts were restructured during the year

d) Fraud accounts (Amount in ₹ crore)

	Current Year (2025-26)	Previous Year (2024-25)
Number of Frauds Reported	Nil	Nil
Amount involved in fraud	Nil	Nil
Amount of provision made for such frauds	Nil	Nil
Amount of Unamortized provision debited from 'other reserves' as at the end of the year	Nil	Nil

e) Disclosure under Resolution Framework for COVID-19-related Stressed accounts (Amount in ₹ Lakhs)

Type of borrower	Exposure to accounts classified as Standard consequent to implementation of resolution plan– Position as on 31.03.2025 (A)	Of (A), aggregate debt that slipped into NPA during the Year	Of (A) amount written off during the year	Of (A) amount paid by the borrowers during the year 2025-26	Exposure to accounts classified as Standard consequent to implementation of resolution plan – Position as on 31.03.2026
Personal Loans	339.72	-	-	82.38	257.34
Corporate persons*	-	-	-	-	-
Of which MSMEs	1749.90	-	-	1116.35	633.55
Others	1332.95	-	-	1332.95	-
Total	**3422.57**	**-**	**-**	**2531.68**	**890.89**

5. Exposures : a) Exposure to real estate sector (Amount in ₹ crore)

Category	Current Year (2025-26)	Previous Year (2024-25)
i) Direct exposure	-	-
a) Residential Mortgages –	184.92	134.48
b) Commercial Real Estate –	46.13	51.03
c) Investments in Mortgage-Backed Securities (MBS) & Other securitized exposure	-	-
ii) Indirect Exposure	-	-
Total Exposure to Real Estate Sector	231.05	185.51

b) Exposure to capital market NA

c) Risk category-wise country exposure: NA

d) Unsecured advances (Amount in ₹ crore)

Particular	Current Year (2025-26)	Previous Year (2024-25)
Total unsecured advances of the bank	6.20	5.48
Out of the above, amount of advances for which intangible securities such as charge over the rights, licenses, authority, etc. have been taken	-	-
Estimated value of such intangible securities	-	-

e) Unhedged foreign currency exposure: - NIL

6. Concentration of deposits, advances, exposures and NPAs: a) Concentration of deposits (Amount in ₹ crore)

Particulars	Current Year (2025-26)	Previous Year (2024-25)
Total deposits of the twenty largest depositors	45.21	27.66
Percentage of deposits of twenty largest depositors to total deposits of the bank	4.42%	3.03%

b) Concentration of advances (Amount in ₹ crore)

Particulars	Current Year (2025-26)	Previous Year (2024-25)
Total advances of the twenty largest borrowers	226.83	208.34
Percentage of advances of twenty largest borrowers to total advances of the bank	43.84%	40.44%

c) Concentration of exposures (Amount in ₹ crore)

Particulars	Current Year (2025-26)	Previous Year (2024-25)
Total exposure to the twenty largest Borrowers / customers	226.83	208.34
Percentage of exposures to the twenty largest borrowers/ customers to the total exposure of the bank on borrowers/ customers	43.84%	40.44%

d) Concentration of NPAs (Amount in ₹ crore)

Particulars	Current Year (2025-26)	Previous Year (2024-25)
Total Exposure to the top twenty NPA account	172.43	173.34
Percentage of exposures to the twenty largest NPA exposure to total Gross NPA	95.82%	84.06%

7. Derivatives : Nil

8. Transfers to Depositor Education and Awareness Fund (DEA Fund) (Amount in ₹ crore)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Current Year (2025-26)	Previous Year (2024-25)
i.	Opening balance of amounts transferred to DEA Fund	**6.44**	**5.61**
ii.	Add: Amounts transferred to DEA Fund during the year	1.43	0.99
iii.	Less:Amounts reimbursed by DEA Fund towards claims	0.10	0.16
Iv	Closing balance of amounts transferred to DEA Fund	**7.77**	**6.44**

9. Disclosure of complaints : a) Summary information on complaints received by the bank from customers and from the Offices of Banking Ombudsman (OBOs)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Current Year (2025-26)	Previous Year (2024-25)
	Complaints received by the bank from its customers	-	-
1	Number of complaints pending at beginning of the year	-	-
2	Number of complaints received during the year	-	2
3	Number of complaints disposed during the year	-	2
	3.1 of which, number of complaints rejected by the bank	-	-
4	Number of complaints pending at the end of the year	-	-
	Maintainable complaints received by the bank from OBOs	-	-
5.	Number of maintainable complaints received by the bank from OBOs	-	-
	5.1 Of 5, number of complaints resolved in favour of the bank	-	-
	5.2 Of 5, number of complaints resolved in favour of the bank	-	-
	5.3 Of 5, number of complaints resolved after passing of Awards by BOs against the bank	-	-
6	Number of Awards unimplemented within the stipulated time (other than those appealed)	-	-

b) Top five grounds of complaints received by the bank from Customers

Grounds of complaints, (i.e. complaints relating to)	Number of complaints pending at the beginning of the year	Number of complaints received during the year	% increase/ decrease in the number of complaints received over the previous year	Number of complaints pending at the end of the year	Of 5, number of complaints pending beyond 30 days
1	2	3	4	5	6
CURRENT YEAR (2025-26)					
GROUND-1	-	-	-	-	-
GROUND-2	-	-	-	-	-
GROUND-3	-	-	-	-	-
GROUND-4	-	-	-	-	-
GROUND-5	-	-	-	-	-
Others	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	-
PREVIOUS YEAR (2024-25)					
GROUND-1	-	-	-	-	-
GROUND-2	-	-	-	-	-
GROUND-3	-	-	-	-	-
GROUND-4	-	-	-	-	-
GROUND-5	-	-	-	-	-
Others	Loans	2	0%	-	-
Total	-	**2**	**0%**	-	-

10. Disclosure of penalties imposed by the Reserve Bank of India: NIL

11. Disclosures on remuneration: NIL

12. Other Disclosures : a) Business ratios

Particular	Current Year (2025-26)	Previous Year (2024-25)
i) Interest Income as a percentage to Working Funds	5.32%	6.00%
ii) Non-interest income as a percentage to Working Funds	0.67%	0.19%
iii) Cost of Deposits	7.03%	6.86%
iv) Net Interest Margin	1.46%	3.46%
v) Operating Profit as a percentage to Working Funds	2.28%	1.34%
vi) Return on Assets (net profit/avg.total assets)	0.11%	0.83%
vii) Business (deposits plus advances) per employee (in ₹ crore)	13.76	11.80
viii) Profit per employee (in ₹ crore) net profit during the year	0.35	0.19

b) Bank assurance business: NIL

c) Marketing and distribution: NIL

d) Disclosures regarding Priority Sector Lending Certificates (PSLCs) :

Date of Purchase	06.03.2026
PSL Certificate type	PSLC- Micro Enterprises
Number of units purchased	800 units
Face value	Rs.200.00 crores
Premium per unit	0.01%
Premium Amount	Rs.2.00 Lakhs
PSL Certificate issued by	HDFC Bank limited

e) Provisions and contingencies **(Amount in ₹ crore)**

Sl. No.	Provision Debited to P&L Account	Current Year (2025-26)	Previous Year (2024-25)
1	Provisions for NPI	NIL	NIL
2	Provisions towards NPA	NIL	6.00
3	Provision Made towards Income Tax	2.81	4.85
4	Other Provision and Contingencies with detail		
a)	Provision for Inv. Fluctuation Reserve	0	0
b)	Provision to Earned Leave encashment	0.56*	0.45
c)	Provision for Deferred tax liability/assets	(0.007)	(0.09)

* Provision of Rs. 0.56 crores towards EL encashment is booked under Establishment in P and L.

f) Payment of DICGC Insurance Premium (Amount in ₹ crore)

Sl.No.	Particulars	Current Year (2025-26)	Previous Year (2024-25)
i.	Payment Of DICGC Premium	1.14	1.12
ii.	Arrears in Payment Of DICGC Premium	NIL	NIL

g) Disclosure of facilities granted to directors and their relatives (Amount in ₹ crore)

Sl.No.	Director	Account holder Name	Relationship with Director	Balance amount
01	Sri L. Ganesh	Smt. Lalitha L.	Sister	0.03

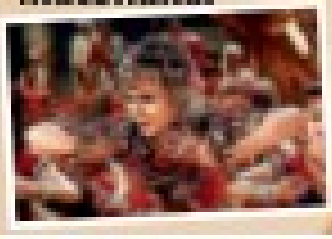
For SIR M. VISVESVARAYA CO-OPERATIVE BANK LIMITED

Sd/-	Sd/-	Sd/-	Sd/-
(B A SREEDHARA)	(S RAVIKUMAR)	(L GANESH)	(S. S. SRINIVASA RAO)
Chief Executive Officer	Director	Vice-President	President

Place: BANGALORE
Date: 25.06.2026

For S V R & Associates
Chartered Accountants
(Reg No. 003767S)
Sd/-
(M. S. VISWESHWARAIAH)
Partner
(Membership No: 019278)
UDIN: 26019278UTDRUQ9571

I almost refused to do Chamma Chamma: Urmila Matondkar



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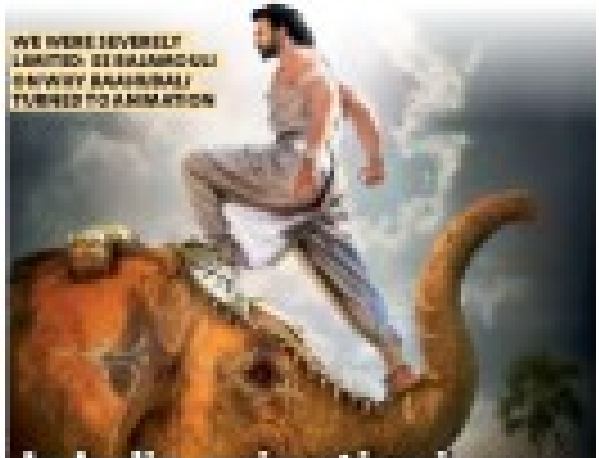

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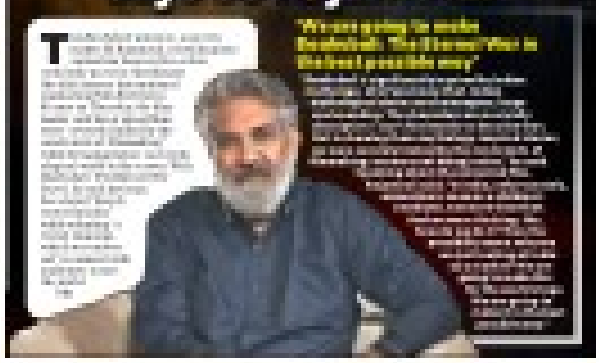
In India, animation is seen as children's medium, says SS Rajamouli



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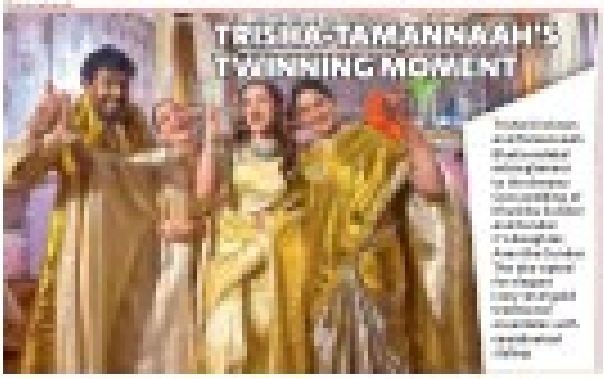
'We are going to make Baahubali: The Eternal War in the best possible way'



TRISHA-TAMANNAAH'S TWINNING MOMENT

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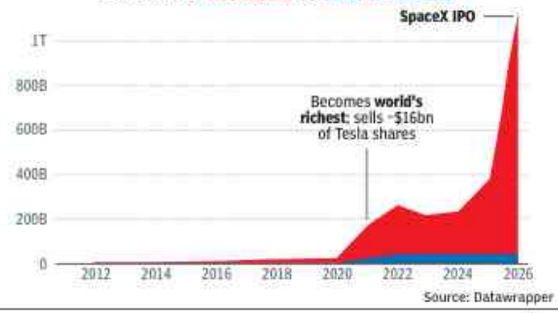
STATISTICS A slice of life in numbers

Why Musk's trillion-dollar moment was mostly on paper

Musk briefly became the world's first trillionaire before SpaceX shares fell more than 30% from their recent peak. His rise has been dramatic: nearly broke in 2018 and worth $25bn by 2020, he built most of his fortune in the years since. But little of it is cash . He has taken out $39bn before tax from selling Zip2, PayPal and Tesla shares, much of which went toward buying 'X'

Elon Musk's net worth vs cash taken out



Source: Datawrapper

ITAT: Delayed flat deed can't block capital gains relief

Lubna.Kably@timesofindia.com

RESPITE FOR HOMEBUYERS

Mumbai: In a ruling that could benefit taxpayers investing in under-construction or redevelopment projects, the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) has held that tax relief on capital gains cannot be denied merely because the final conveyance deed is executed after the prescribed period. The relief is granted provided the taxpayer has acquired enforceable rights in an identifiable residential property and made the investment within the statutory timeline.

Section 54 of the Income-tax (I-T) Act grants relief on capital gains if the money from selling a house is reinvested in another residential property. ITAT allowed a Rs 2 crore deduction claimed by the taxpayer in respect of capital gains arising from the sale of a residential property during the financial year 2013-14. The taxpayer, represented by his legal heir, submitted he had invested in a redevelopment project by entering into an agreement in Jan 2014 while the registered transfer deed was executed later only in Nov 2016.

The I-T officer and the National Faceless Appeal Centre had rejected his tax benefit claim, by holding that the taxpayer had merely acquired rights in a 'future property' through an unregistered arrangement and had not purchased a residential house within the time prescribed under the Act.

Reversing the finding, ITAT said the taxpayer had effectively bought a specific flat when he paid for it under the Jan 2014 agreement. The sale deed registered later only formalised that purchase. The ITAT said Section 54 is a beneficial provision intended to promote investment in residential housing and must receive a liberal interpretation. The ITAT also allowed the taxpayer to claim the entire Rs 16.24 lakh spent by him on legal, brokerage and consultancy charges incurred while selling the old house. It held that since he had actually paid the full amount, the deduction could not be restricted merely because he owned only a 49% share in the old property.

In this case, the tax tribunal also upheld the tax department's decision to apply the clubbing provisions to the taxpayer. In simple terms, clubbing provisions prevent taxpayers from reducing their tax liability by transferring assets to a relative without consideration. Since the taxpayer had gifted a part of the old property to his wife before its sale, the capital gains arising from her share were taxable in his hands.

Time running out for uploading of Waqf data, corrections

Ambika.Pandit@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: The time for earning the legal waqf tag for properties that existed before the Waqf Amendment Act 2025 came into effect is running out fast. The cut-off for making corrections for properties whose details are already uploaded ends on June 30. Further, all those who have still not uploaded information on their properties in keeping with the six months' extension granted to them by various tribunals face the risk of missing the bus if they are unable to comply on time as the law does not provide for further extensions.

Amidst this race against time and over one year since the UMEED – Central Waqf Portal was launched on June 6, around 5.87 lakh of the over 7.95 lakh waqf properties whose details have been uploaded so far have been approved.

Pune man gives rat poison at Mumbai Moharram procession, arrested

Mumbai: A 39-year-old Pune resident was arrested after police caught him distributing capsules mixed with zinc phosphide, a highly toxic acute rodenticide to control rats and mice, to devotees participating in a Moharram procession at Byculla late Friday, **reports Ahmed Ali**.

Police recovered 1,400 tablets from Faiyyaz Premji, 39, a resident of Viman Nagar in Pune. One of the devotees, Salman Sayeed, 26, who had allegedly consumed one of the capsules, later complained of discomfort and vomiting. He was rushed to a hospital and is now reported to be out of danger. Premji said the capsules were intended to relieve pain suffered by devotees participating in self-flagellation and other acts of mourning during Moharram.

A team led by senior inspector Deepak Sawant, deployed for bandobast during Friday's procession, noticed the accused allegedly distributing capsules. Officers immediately detained him before he could hand out more capsules.

Bhagyaraj, Tamil cinema's one-man studio, is no more

Pushpa.Narayan
@timesofindia.com

1953-2026

Chennai: K Bhagyaraj, a director, actor, screenwriter, composer and novelist, who shaped Tamil cinema across five decades, debuted and schooled a generation of actors, directors and writers, passed away on Saturday in Chennai. He was 73. He had complained of discomfort after a morning walk before being brought unconscious to Apollo Hospitals, where doctors declared him dead.

The comes two weeks after the death of his mentor, K Bharathiraja. Two days ago, the film fraternity had gathered in Goa to celebrate the wedding of Avantika Sundar, daughter of actor Khushbu and director Sundar C. "He was there at the wedding. We had so much fun," said actor Suhasini. By mid-morning, condolences were pouring in from chief minister C Joseph Vijay, who called it an "irreplaceable loss" to Tamil cinema and announced state honours for the final journey.

Born Krishnaswamy Bhagyaraj on January 7, 1953, in Vellankoil near Gobichettipalayam, he arrived in Chennai with ambition and a few friends. His first encounter with a film set came in 1973, when he slipped into the shoot of K S Gopalakrishnan's comedy Vandhaale Magaraasi as a curious onlooker, watching Jayalalithaa, Jaishankar and M N Rajam from a distance. He posed as set staff and helped move cameras and equipment. He left the floor that day, promising to return only with a role.

Away from the arc-lights, he edited the weekly Tamil magazine Bhagya, wrote several novels and briefly tested the political waters — launching a party named after MGR, then moving to the AIADMK and later the DMK before walking away from politics.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
The general public are hereby informed that my client is proposed to purchase the converted property for eco-tourism activities-Agriculture bearing in **Sy. No. 144** measuring 38 guntas, situated at **Thattaguppe Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk,** with a Farm house. The schedule property mentioned hereunder, from its owner **Sri. S L Ashok and Smt. K S Manjula.**
Persons objecting for the proposed purchase of having any rights in the schedule property may lodge their objections and for claims with the undersigned along with supporting documentary evidence within **15 days** from the date of this publications and objections for claims reserved thereafter will not be binding on my clients and my clients will proceed to purchase the below mentioned properties as if there are no claimants or objections.
SCHEDULE
All that piece and parcel of converted property for eco-tourism activities-Agriculture, property bearing is **Sy. No. 144** measuring **38 guntas,** with Farm house, situated at **Thattaguppe Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk** bounded on the **East by : Property belongs to Swamy kannan, West by : Road, North by : Land belongs to Chikkajuvani, South by : Property belongs to Anthoniyappa.**
M.L. GOWDA & ASSOCIATES
Advocates
No. 165, 1st Floor, 6th Main, Jayanagar, 4th Block, Bengaluru-560 011.
Ph: 9845493719
Email: mlgchatra@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the general public that our client is intending to enter into a sale deed and Joint Development Agreement with respect to all that piece and parcel of the residentially converted immovable property bearing Sy no.78, measuring 4 Acres 17 Guntas (exclusive of 5 Guntas of Kharab), situated at Kumbalgodu Village, Kengeri Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk.
The said property is represented to be owned by **M/S EARTHITECHS PVT LTD,** A Company Registered under the Indian Companies Act 2013,having its Registered Office at No.11,"RAMAPURAM HOUSE", Richmond Road, Bangalore-560025, Rep by its Manager Finance and Authorized Signatory; **Mr. ELIAS K.T** Son of K.V.Thomas, having acquired the same through registered sale deed and title deeds relating to the said property are under verification.
Any person, authorities, Banks, Financial institute, legal heirs or any other authority's etc having any right, title, interest, claim or demand of any nature in any manner whatsoever in respect of the said property, is hereby required to make the same known in writing along with the documentary proof thereof, to the address below. **Within 10 days** from the date of publication hereof, failing which the negotiations shall be completed, without any reference to such claims and any claims received thereafter shall not be entertained and shall be deemed to have been given up or waived.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
That all that piece and parcel of the residentially converted immovable property bearing **Sy No.78,** measuring an extent of 4 Acres 17 Guntas, exclusive of 5 Guntas of Kharab, situated at **Kumbalgodu Village,** Kengeri Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk and bounded by;
East by : Land belonging to Eraiah and Bode Gowda (now Pape Gowda& Muninarasaiah) **West by :** Road, **North by :** Govt Halla, **South by :** Property of Pilla Muniyanna (now Pilla Kempaiah's Land).
M/s LEGAL NEXUS
Advocate & Consultants.
No. 428, 24 th Main, 25th cross, 2 Sector, H.S.R Layout, Bangalore-560 102
M : 9945668974/9164150690

TENDERS

MRF
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MRF, a leading tyre manufacturing company is interested in disposal of process scraps generated at its plants located at Chennai, Arakonam, Perambalur (All Tamil Nadu), Pondicherry, Kottayam (Kerala), Medak, Ankenpally (Telangana), Goa and Dahej (Gujarat).
Parties interested in quoting for Rubber / Plastic waste / Plastic Hazardous waste items, should possess required EPR / Pollution control board certificate / Licence & should respond along with the relevant copies.
Reputed scrap contractors may respond confirming their interest in participating in an E-Auction to:
SENIOR GENERAL MANAGER - MATERIALS
MRF LIMITED
114, Greams Road, Chennai - 600 006.
Email:
santhoshkumar.r@mrfmail.com

IFIN
IFCI FINANCIAL SERVICES LIMITED
(Subsidiary of IFCI Limited, A Govt. of India Undertaking)
Corporate Office: Kamak Towers, 4th Floor, Plot No. 12-A (SP) Thiru-Vi-Ka Industrial Estate, Ekkatuthangal, Guindy, Chennai-32. Ph:044-66239400
PREMISES REQUIRED ON LONG LEASE AT BANGLORE
IFIN desires to take office premises on long term lease basis at Bengaluru. Interested Landlords/Owners may apply. The specifications like measuring carpet areas, location as given hereudner. The application documents can be downloaded from the website **www.ifinltd.in (Tender Page).** The complete signed and sealed application form to reach Admin Dept., IFCI Financial Services Ltd., Kamak Towers, 4th Floor, Plot No. 12-A (SP) Thiru-Vi-Ka Industrial Estate, Ekkatuthangal, Guindy, Chennai 600032 OR email all the necessary documents with password protected PDF file to **admin@ifinltd.in on or before 8th July 2026 at 5.30pm.**
Branch Name: Bangaluru
Location: in & around Cubbonpet Main Road, KH Road, Gandhi Nagar
Carpet Ares in Sq.ft: Approx. 500 to 700 Sq. ft.
IFIN Administration Department

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Belliappa A C / A C Belliappa, S/O A C Chengappa, R/O at Flat No:401, Victory Churekh Apartment, 5th D-Cross, 1st Main Road, Hennur Garden, Horamavu Post, Bengaluru-560 113, changed my name to AJJINIKANDA CHENGAPPA BELLIAPPA vide Affidavit dated 23-June-2026 before Notary V.P. Ramesh, Virajpet, Kodagu.

I, ARMY No. 7774559A, Rank: NK/TS, Name: Ramareddy.K, resident of Bangalore, have changed my spouse name from K L Kowsalya Reddy to Kowsalya K L, vide affidavit dated 25-06-2026 sworn before IInd.Addl. Civil Judge & J. M. F. C, Chitradurga.

I, Sarvamangala, D/O Appaiah Kaikondrahalli, R/O 9 Shiva Krupa, BDS Nagar, Kothanur, Bangalore 560077, declare that Sarvamangala A, Sarvamangalaappaiah, and Sarvamangala are one and the same person, and my official name shall be Sarvamangala.

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Mission Shakti
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Women Dignity
Women Empowerment

WOMEN AT THE HEART OF UP'S GROWTH STORY

PICS: DIPR, UTTAR PRADESH GOVERNMENT

Empowering women, transforming Uttar Pradesh

From safety and welfare to enterprise and education, Uttar Pradesh is building a stronger future through women-led development

Uttar Pradesh has emerged as a leading example of women-centric governance, with sustained efforts focused on safety, dignity, education and economic empowerment. Guided by the vision of PM Narendra Modi's 'Matru Shakti-Rashtra Shakti', the state has implemented a wide spectrum of initiatives aimed at strengthening women's participation across social, economic and institutional spheres. Through Mission Shakti, welfare programmes, employment opportunities, educational support and social security measures, Uttar Pradesh is fostering an ecosystem where women and girls are increasingly empowered, self-reliant and central to the state's growth story.

From protection to empowerment

- Uttar Pradesh ranks first in the country in securing convictions in crimes against women and under the POCSO Act
- Mission Shakti centres have been established in every police station across the state
- A strict zero-tolerance policy against crime has strengthened women's safety and institutional support mechanisms
- Women now receive 20% reservation in the police force, with more than 44,000 women currently serving in the department
- Mission Shakti has evolved into a large-scale initiative promoting women's safety, dignity, legal awareness and self-reliance

Welfare with dignity

- More than 40.34 lakh destitute women receiving a monthly pension of ₹1,000 are getting ₹1,500 since April 2026
- The Mukhyamantri Samuhik Vivah Yojana has supported more than 5.50 lakh marriages
- Under the Mukhyamantri Kanya Sumangala Yojana, 27.37 lakh girls have benefited
- The Mukhyamantri Bal Seva Yojana has extended support to more than 1.05 lakh children

- Under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, free LPG connections have been provided to 1.86 crore families
- The Swachh Bharat Mission (Rural) Phase-1 and 2 have led to the construction of more than 3.31 crore toilets, significantly improving sanitation and dignity for women

Property rights & financial inclusion

- More than 1.10 crore ownership certificates, in which majority are women, under the PM SVAMITVA Yojana (Gharauni)
- Women are entitled to a 1% rebate on stamp duty for property registrations up to ₹1 crore, encouraging greater financial security and ownership

Advancing women-led growth

- Uttar Pradesh's integrated approach to women empowerment combines safety, welfare, education, entrepreneurship and employment generation
- Women across the state are emerging as entrepreneurs, professionals, students, workers and leaders, contributing significantly to social progress and economic growth
- Through focused policy interventions and sustained institutional support, Uttar Pradesh continues to strengthen its vision of inclusive and women-led development

STRENGTHENING GIRLS' EDUCATION ECOSYSTEM

Educational Access & Infrastructure

87,647
girls enrolled in upgraded schools
Facilities support Class 6 through 12 to ensure higher education continuity

746 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas

Mata Ahilyabai Holkar Hostels established
Safe urban housing provided for working women in 16 major cities including Lucknow, Gautam Buddh Nagar and Ghaziabad

Incentives & Social Empowerment

Rani Lakshmibai Scooty Scheme
Supports meritorious girl students by providing them transportation for pursuing higher education

Guardian-free Haj pilgrimage for women
Muslim women are now enabled to undertake pilgrimage without a male guardian

Educational Advancement of Girls
Educational and education-related infrastructure support for girls has emerged as a key pillar of women's empowerment in Uttar Pradesh

AI GENERATED INFOGRAPHIC

KEY HELPLINES & SAFETY NETWORKS

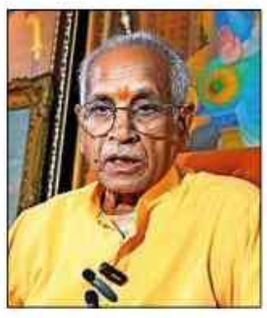
1090	Women Power Line
181	Women Helpline
102	Ambulance Helpline for Pregnant Women & Newborn Babies
1930	Cyber Helpline
112	Police Emergency Service
1076	Chief Minister Helpline

READER ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE

Ram temple trust gen secy Rai, member Mishra resign

Bid To Defame Sanatan Won't Succeed: Trust

Shalabh & Arshad Afzaal Khan



The FIR lodged Thursday by another trust member names Tinnu Yadav—a long-time associate of Champat Rai (in pic)—along with the cash counting in-charge & six employees of the agency to which SBI outsourced counting work

Lucknow/Ayodhya: After days of speculation, the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust confirmed Saturday that its general secretary, Champat Rai, and member Anil Mishra have resigned amid a controversy over embezzlement of donation money received at the temple, with eight accused arrested and in judicial custody.

Trust treasurer Govind Giri Dev confirmed through a press release that Rai, and Mishra, who was responsible for supervising the cash counting procedure, have sent their resignations to the trust. "The trust will take a decision on this issue at its next meeting (in July)," Giri said.

VHP president Ashok Kumar welcomed their decision to step down, saying they resigned on moral grounds. "It is a courageous decision on their part to resign from their posts. It reflects their commitment to a fair and impartial inquiry into the entire matter," Kumar said.

Giri stressed the trust was determined to get to the bottom of things and that attempts to "defame Sanatan Dharm" would not succeed.

He said ornaments, jewellery, and gold and silver bricks are kept safely and details of all such items have been maintained in logbooks. "We are shocked, hurt and deeply saddened by the incidents that have come to light in the past few days at Shri Ram Temple... we are committed to ensuring a fair investigation and to reassuring the devotees," he said in a statement.

Current arrangements are excellent: Mathura seer

Agra: Days after Mathura-based seer Dinesh "Phalahari" Maharaj claimed a "massive embezzlement in donations" at Shri Krishna Janmabhoomi Temple, he told **TOI** Saturday that the "current arrangements at Mathura temple were excellent as all systems were in order", reports **Sudeep Lavania**.

Explaining the reason behind his U-turn, Dinesh Phalahari said, "A priest had told me that a bigger scam than Ayodhya had happened here... I repeatedly asked the priest to provide evidence, but he couldn't. I also want to say that some people are trying to damage the image of this grand temple and govt, and we do not want to give them that opportunity."

Police suspect embezzlement may not have been isolated act

▸ Continued from P 1

Separate from the SIT, the state police are examining whether standard banking protocols were followed while depositing large volumes of cash collected from donation boxes at the Ram temple. The focus is on identifying any irregularities in cash handling, delayed deposits, discrepancies in recorded amounts and possible collusion at the banking level.

Police said the probe is now tracking the money trail — from collection counters and counting centres to final deposits in designated accounts. Officials linked to the banking process are likely to be questioned on cash reconciliation, deposit timelines, verification mechanisms and internal checks, with documents, transaction logs and CCTV footage being cross-verified for inconsistencies.

Police suspect that the alleged embezzlement may not have been an isolated act and are probing whether evidence was destroyed or manipulated to conceal discrepancies. "Custodial questioning will help in recovering material evidence, verifying financial trails and identifying any additional persons involved," a senior officer said.

Section 13(1) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, which deals with criminal misconduct by public servants, has been invoked in the FIR, allowing investigators to bring bank officials under the ambit of the case if they are found to have abused their official positions, facilitated misappropriation, or failed in their duty.

Officers said scrutiny of bank officials will also extend to examining whether any entrusted funds were dishonestly diverted or any gains disproportionate to known income were generated in the period under investigation.

The SIT will separately record fresh statements of temple staff, volunteers engaged in donation collection, counting personnel, and those responsible for transportation and deposit of offerings.

The residences of some suspects may also be visited, officials added.

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WANTED BRIDES

MATRIMONIALS
WANTED BRIDES
BY CASTE
AGARWAL-BISA

29/ 5'10 B.Tech- IIT MBA-IIM wrkn with MNC 1Cr + Father Indtrlst caste no bar.No Dema -nd Affluent fmly # 9826502693 Email: bdmatj@gmail.com

BRAHMIN

B.TECH /PG (BITS), Sarjupari Brahmin 25/ 5'9", job, only son,Teetotaler. Father Eng Business, Mother Dr. seeks Prof. Qual btfl girl 8424085123

SM4 48/6' B.Tech+MBA Brahmin boy, i'less divorcee, wkg abroad in MNC, veg, teetotaller, non-maglik, shubhmurari36@gmail.com

MBA (Symbiosis) + B.E., Gaur Brahmin boy, 32/5'10", Wkg at MNC in Mumbai 35+LPA. Family in Guj,Native Raj.Seeks Prof Qualfd Girl #9925022461

PQM4 BTech MBA ISB 31yr 5'10"Teetotaler NonSmoking posted Gurugram CTC 40 LPA boy. All upper caste welcome. Send biodata to 7060884999.

ALLIANCE invited frm girls of any State for our son B.Com MBA 1988/6'3" doing own B'nes Puducherry (Pondicherry) # 9894750160

WANTED BRIDE
35 Year Old Brahmin Boy. Management Graduate from World's best Management College. University Topper & Record Holder. Managing Big Family Business. Belongs to Central India
Mob.: 9183128845

KAYASTHA

KAYASTHA USA based professional, 35 yrs, Divorced (1-yr short marriage, no kids). IIT Engineer, USA PhD, work visa. Seeking Prof Qual bride, open to relocate. csinha1001@gmail.com

REPUTED Kayastha family seeks intelligent, b'ful, hmly, cultured bride from middle class educ. fmly for Son BTech, high income, 27/5'8"/57kg. No dowry any caste # 9811108576.

WANTED Kayastha working girl for B.Tech, MBA boy in Bangalore. Born in 2000, working as a Manager (16 LPA). +919938992482

IIT BTech H'some Kayastha Srivastava boy, S/W engineer, MNC Noida, Apr'93, 5'7", 70+LPA, seeks b'ful, cultured, well-educated girl. 8527839304

MANAGER Big4 consulting, Bangalore 31/5'2" Engg MBA, Srivastava, Non-Manglik. Seeks proff. qlfd. girl willing to relocate. Contact: 9582546668

SRIV. Feb'80/ 5'11" BTech, MS, PhD., MNC, Bangluru (Mutual Divorced) Lko. family seeks Prof. Qlfd. Girl. Caste No Bar. Send BHP at 8127856898

1984 Born,Karan,5' 9",BTech IITD,60+lpa Delhi,Veg. Share biodata -shadee.munger@gmail.com , 6201552582/ 9900640222

KUSHWAHA

KUSHWAHA H'some Boy 28/5' 7" MCA Engr Google Banglr 25LPA seeks B'ful Wkg girl, Dumari 841313 #7294809376, 9973433805 for messages

YADAV

Wanted Bride
Alliance invited for handsome Yadav boy, 30 yrs, 5'10", B.Tech, MBA, running own IT consultancy in Bhopal. Father Ex-Defence Officer. Bhopal based. Caste No Bar.
Contact : 8319447170, 9893106147

BY COMMUNITY

AGARWAL

SQM 4 B.Tech, Wkg MNC S/W Developer-2, Apr'98/171 CM, Jindal Boy, H'some Pkg, Seeks Good looking Girl (Ht: 5'2" & above. # 9047888284

PQM4 NM Singhal boy April 95, 31/5'6", PhD from US, Scientist C, central govt inst. in Delhi, #9412394357

JAT

SM4 25yrs 5'11" Engg. Jat boy Currently wrkg in Bangalore MNC 60LPA W'Stld family bsd in Gurgaon Seeks Qlfd Edu. B'ful girl # 9599298935

NORTH INDIAN

SOFTWARE Engineer, 30, Punjabi, BLR based working in MNC, looking for well educated and career oriented bride Mob:9986169366

BY PROFESSION

GOVERNMENT/ DEFENCE

ALLIANCE Invited for our 29 yrs , 5'7" boy, Indian Foreign Service Officer, from reputed North Indian family with strong academic background. Seeking professionally accomplished bride from IAS/IPS/IRS/IRMS/IES, other Central/State Services. Caste No Bar. Values, integrity, and family orientation essential. WhAp 9871256251, 9235563771

BY RELIGION

HINDU

SEEKING alliance for our 32yearold son (US citizen, M.S., IT Manager in a top US corporation, Hindu – Arya Vysya). Looking for an educated bride 24+Plus years (Hindu, caste no bar), from a family with traditional values. Email: NRI2026JR@gmail.com

KAYASTHA 34 yrs, 5'8", BTech (IIIT-A), MBA (USA), working in USA (H1B), seeks compatible partner. Parents doctors in MP. Ph: 9425024489.

MUSLIM

SUNNI Bengali, 28, USA-based, MIM & B.Tech (Mech). Owns businesses in USA & UAE. Seeks bride from a good, affluent family, willing to settle abroad. WAP biodata: 9830494158

SIKH

GURSIKH Khatri family looking for PQ well educated match for 46+, 5'6" Never married B.E, IIM MBA working senior position based in Dubai handsome pkg Email bio pic: singhpm14@gmail.com ; whatsapp only: 9810001389; divorcees and agencies strictly excuse

FAIR, Very Handsome Sikh Arora boy 6 ft (Clean Shaven) 33 years MA Hons from Prestigious University in UK. Overlooking family Business in Chandigarh, belonging to Affluent Family. Seeking well educated beautiful caring girl from Status Cultured Family. Whatsapp 62395 90744

GENERAL

CASTE NO BAR

PQM for 33/5'8", B.Tech, MBA (IIMC), Mgt. Consultant - MNC, 30 LPA, Parents Retd. Govt. Officers, No Sibling, Education-oriented, No Dowry, all upper caste welcome. Mb: 9760810220.

AUSTRALIAN citizen, Punjabi Khatri boy 31/5'10"/BE (H) wrkg MNC,Looking for family oriented edu girl from India/ Australia.Wts.App 9313344246

USA bsd Sikh Kamboj,94/5'8", fair,MBA,US Ctzn,freight Dispatcher&broker,well-stld,seeks profnl qlfd, bride from respected family. 9934164010

ESTD:1998 For Elite profiles both India/ abroad, 1st/ 2nd/ Late marriages (personalised services). CT Ushodhaya on whatsapp 9611919477,9886884291

KAYASTHA widower,48, 5'5",MCA/MBA,35LPA,1 daughter,Mumbai,Kindly send Biodata:9323792387 / mksmum7@gmail.com

BENG Brah. Groom 38/6'2" M.S.(USA) Canadian Citizen Officer in Prov. Govt. seeks qlfd. suitable match. Caste / language no bar. # 9038411012

DOCTOR, 47 Yrs old,settled in USA for 16 Yrs. Handsome Salary, Caste & Religion No Bar. Mobile : +917838319733 +919873295961, +919939322345.

MERCHANT NAVAL OFFICER
5'8/1990 Defence background Mumbai based, Punjabi family
9769100269

BRIDE WANTED
Affluent Teli / Gandla / Telikula Telugu Family based in Hyderabad looking for an alliance for their son
35 Years; M.S.: Industrialist; Divorcee in short period.
Seeking a well-educated HINDU BRIDE from a like-minded - cultured family who is willing to support him in business. Caste-no-Bar.
Mobile No : +91 80083 16663

COSMOPOLITAN

TAMIL Mudaliyar, Bangalore, M, 30 yrs, 5'6", Handsome Surgeon, fit, affluent. MS, MCh (GI), Dec '26. Seeks beautiful, doctor bride — MS / MCh OB-GYN / Surgical. BHP: 9945011811

DM Dr(Dec-91, 6'1, Tamil) seeks a virtuous, tall, slim, v.fair, PG Dr/well edu bride (29-31 yrs) at Bangalore.Parents: 9342529547 / 9072118800

SEEK Alliance For UK based British Citizen Hindu 36 5'10 IT Architect 1.5CrPA seeks veg family +447882047224

AFFLUENT AND REPUTED SOUTH DELHI (PUNJABI+ BANIYA) FAMILY invites alliance for their only son, 27 / 6 ft, B.Tech & MBA, a successful entrepreneur managing his own thriving business & also associated with a reputed MNC. UAE Golden Visa holder. Parents CXO position in listed MNCs. Seeking a well-edu., compatible girl from a respectable family with strong values.
Contact: 9711180916 (NO MARRIAGE BUREAUS)

SECOND MARRIAGE

BENGALI 6'1", 36, divorced, Media industry, own home in Mumbai and Delhi, respectable family seeks bride, 5'6" and above Early marriage. rajiv.nag@cyberqindia.com

RETIRED Colonel Widower Children free Delhi 62 Yr/172 Very Fit Seeks Widow / Divorced/ Awaiting Divorce Prefer Ex-Lady Officer from Forces or Equal Status, from Other Services also, age 44-56 (+/-) Call/ W'App: 8506007707, Em: danetopchi@gmail.com

45LPA, 38 years, IIT, PhD, 6'1, Slim, Brahmin, Divorced, No issue, no ali Father: Central Govt Seeks Prof Qual Bride 9634266197

RELIGION NO BAR

39/5'10" Unmarried boy caste no bar B.tech-NIT MBA ISB Wrkg MNC 50 LPA Business family Accept Divorce & Widow 9407932961,9009486689

BY LANGUAGE

GUJARATI

JULY 1999 B.TECH IT 5'.8" Software Engineer MNC Bengaluru 65+LPA Mumbai family seeks working-Educated girl-9224449011.

PUNJABI

SUITABLE bride for 31 yr. Punjabi boy 6ft. Very fair and good looking well settled in banglore. Chartered accountant from Mumbai. Contact Saneja 7666940930

SM4 30 yrs/6' H'some boy, B.Tech(Civil), Class 1 Officer in ISRO Bglr, 22LPA, Delhi based khatri family seeks working girl. Caste no bar 8826975045.

BRIDE WANTED
Alliance invited for a well-educated, handsome and professionally established Sikh boy, 29 years, 5'8", BBA, alumnus of Modern School, Barakhamba Road, successfully managing his own business. Belongs to a well-respected and affluent family based in South Delhi & Bareilly. Seeking a well-educated, beautiful, cultured and family-oriented girl from a respectable family.
Please Send Recent Photograph and Complete Biodata to:
asobti423@gmail.com
9359111889

SINDHI

SINDHI Shikarpuri Vegetarian Bangalore based affluent family seeks bride for B.Com/ InterCA/ 28yrs/ 5'5" type-1 diabetic. Call- 9242897211

BY NATIONALITY

NRI/ GREEN CARD

PUNJABI Hindu Arora boy, 27/6'1", MS Business Analytics Chicago, H1B, B.Tech CS, Cultured, family-oriented, Seeking professionally qualified Hindu girl, preferably USA settled. Mobile, Whats'up number +91 9419189485, sushilarora2003@gmail.com

CANADA based Arora boy, 38/5'6", Finance Manager, owns house, seeks beautiful educated bride in India or Canada. Whatsapp. +1-516-749-0164

WANTED GROOMS

WANTED GROOMS

BY CASTE

AGARWAL - BISA

PQM for Beautiful B.Tech Aggarwal Girl,1985/5.5" Working in MNC(Job in NCR), Never Married. M-7303916999, mangal.home.mail@gmail.com

BRAHMIN

AFFLUENT Tyagi Brahmin industrialist family invites alliance for their accomplished & good-looking daughter, born in 1993, height 5'4",well-educated(MBA;CFA Level I cleared). Seeking suitable match from reputed industrialist family. director@nicholas.co.in | M 9795922999

MBBS Doc Uthram Star Vadagalai Iyengar Kanya Kausiga 30/165cm working in NHS London seeks Brahmin Veg well qualified groom working UK 9841031480, 9444034369

ONLY USA based Br boy for Br b'ful girl 1993/5'2",BTech,MS -N.Corolina,w/kg S/W DevOps, Rhode Island.Fathr retd Depty Excise Comm'r. M : 9286759693

MATCH for Well Qlfd B'full Brahmin Girl 1996/5'-4" Company Secretary (CS) Wrkg. as Investment Banker & Corporate Lawyer in Mumbai Contact- 9137557872, 8980933233

10.05.91 Kumaoni Brhmn 5'2" M.Tech BITS wkg B'lore girl seek MBA/BTec/MTec boy setld B'lore, Mum, Hyd, Ahmeda had, all brhmn wlcm 7355582946

SM4 41/5'7" PQ Brahmin girl wkg in MNC in SG, I'less divorcee, veg, teetotaller, non-maglik, kkbvishakha@gmail.com

SP Brahmin, Bhardwaj, 33, V.Fair, 5'5", Family of Doctors Maxillofacial surgeon, Working in a Medical College Contact- 7004566649

GREEN Card Holder Doctor girl fair beautiful 49/5'6" working in New York, issueless divorcee , cast no bar , only US boy prefd. #7091920691

NEVER Married girl 47yr 5.3" MA Economics PGD Statistics Gold Medalist seeks Well settled Never Married boy Caste no bar 9893027755

FOR b'ful, well edu Brh girl 25/5'5" top tier affl'nt b'sns fmly. Seeks h'som well s'ttld Brh boy(<30,min 5'10") c'ltrd high st'tus fmly. 9093344463

BTECH Girl(Divorced) 90/5'3 wkg MNC Bangalore Seeking alliance from families based out of MP 9591190351,9893782502

JAIN

Wanted Groom
Alliance invited for 28 yr 5'5.5" NLIU Bhopal alumna,Education consultant, B'ful, slim,cultured girl from reputed industrial family of Bhopal. Seeking well settled groom from elite business family/senior professional preferred. Jain/Aggarwal/Maheshwari/Marwari preferred.
Cont.: 9425019361
geetamodi0512@gmail.com

ARORA

SM4 23yrs Manglik girl from High Status family doing BDS 4th year Having thallasemia major. If interested then Contact : 9871116643

RAJPUT

WELL-SETTLED groom from elite business/affluent family /be a top rank corporate professional from Rajput/ upper-caste for good looking 31yrs, 5'8", successful corporate professional BE, CS belonging to reputed business family 8770148091, 6268474143

BY PROFESSION

DOCTORS

SUITABLE MATCH FOR A GIRL
29/5'4", MS (ENT)
Currently Senior Resident at GMC Kozhikode. Belongs to a respectable Punjabi family from Mumbai. Father is into Construction Business, Brother is Deputy Commissioner (IRS). Looking for a highly qualified professional (Medical/Civil Services/Business) from a Cultured Background.
Pref : 5'7"+, Age : 29-33 Yrs.
Call: 9820053170

IAS/ ALLIED SERVICES

PHD, LAW, 26/166, FATHER RETIRED FROM ONGC, SEEKS TALL GROOM. 7310844004

BY RELIGION

HINDU

DELHI -BASED BANIYA girl, 34, 5'7", Fair, USA/Harvard Masters, MNC employed. Seeks well educated Groom settled in India. Ph: 9811278555

Looking for GROOM
SM4 Tamil Brahmin - Iyer Girl, 37, 5'6", good looking, fair, smart, CA, MBA working in senior position, issueless divorcee, (very short marriage), hails from an affluent, educated and cultured family with progressive outlook, looking for a professionally qualified and well employed Boy, never married or divorced without issues, aged 38 to 42 years from affluent families with similar values and outlook. Please write to us with details
Phone: 9043949107 (WhatsApp)
Email: asalliancemail@gmail.com

KAYASTHA

MBBS, MD Ansth Tata Kay, Bride 22.7.87/ 5'2" Mum, D. dib fel' Cardio & C care MRCP P-1 & II prf MD Dr, IT 9821212409, sinhaassociates27@gmail.com

KHATRI

PROF Qulfd match for MBA finance girl, 1997/5'5"wrkng in MNC, father WRKG in Oil & gas sector MNC at NOIDA. 9988882108, 8054018639

SAHU-TELI

SAHU (Teli) girl, 29/06/1998 5'6", BASLP, Audiologist, working Jabalpur (M.P.). Seeks Doctor/professionally qualified Home town- kurud (dhamtari) CG.(M)9303253767

YADAV

Wanted Groom
Alliance invited for beautiful Yadav girl, 38 yrs, 5'7", BHMS, Bhopal based. Father Ex-Defence Officer. Caste No Bar.
Contact : 8319447170, 9893106147

BY COMMUNITY

AGARWAL

SM4 Bisa Agr Girl 31/5'4" b'ful fair MD(Path), doing SRship. Affulent family of Lko, seeks Med, IAS, IPS, IRS, IIM match pfbly from Delhi, NCR UP. Decent marriage. M: 9897275101

AGARWAL 1996 born, Educated from respectul fmly, Bangalore based, Looking for Suitable Alliance from Agarwal family call/ WhatsApp 98451 67755

SM for Bansal (Agarwal) Sept 1994, 5'2" M.Tech, Wrkg Bangalore. 40+LPA, seeks pref. wrkg Bangalore. # F. 9897955896, B. 9521429774, Hapur, UP.-245101

MBA IIM & B.Tech B'ful Jain Non-Mnglk girl 32/5'6"/ Mngr in BIG 4 / 39 LPA, Father Retd. PSU, Seeks Prof. Qlfd. well settled boy. # 98030 39803

ADVICE
Readers are advised to make appropriate / thorough enquiries before acting upon any advertisement. This newspaper does not vouch or subscribe to claims and representations made by advertisers regarding particulars of status, age income of bride/groom.

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MUSLIM

INVITING alliances from highly qualified, cultured Muslim professionals (MBA/MS/PhD preferred or pursuing) from top global institutions for our beautiful, talented daughter. Born 14-Feb-1997, 5'6", MS EE (Stanford). Father: 9974177856.

26 yrs, 5'3" Tamil Muslim, fair, Doctor doing MD, educated family, non-hijabi, seeks alliance from modern, well settled, professionally qualified boys, under 30yrs. Ph: 9182872184

SUNNI v'fr. grl, 1985/5'2", Sr. SW Dev.(Lead)Cognizant,Hyd Fmly stld Del... Mthr Sheikh Fthr Ansari. Seeks wel sttld boy fr edu fmly. Wt ap bio/ snap @9718731888, 8287791148

SIKH

GOOD looking, Slim, Sikh girl, 30/5'6", M.Tech, wkg prof. in Bangalore seeks Sikh / Punjabi Smart, Prof. qlfd match in Bangalore. 8421012469

GENERAL

CASTE NO BAR

"DOCTOR MD, DM, Salary 3lakhs pm,1992/155cm Hindu (BC) girl, fair, slim, cultured family, well settle in Bangalore, upper middle class seeks bridegroom MD/MS/DM or Highly qualified engineer with good Salary, caste no bar", Contact 9845522122.

BENGALI Br.39/5'4" slim fair (mutual consent divorced) no children Sr. Mngr in nationalized bank, W'stld, currently posted Mum.Fitness-conscious Seeks W'edu. understanding prof Qlfd & comptble life partner 9005912345/9967586661

WANTED A GROOM (ONLY PUNE, MUMBAI) FOR A PUNE BASED 1990 BORN, , PUNJABI AGARWAL DIVORCEE (NO ISSUE). E-MAIL : marryji0208@gmail.com

SEEKING alliance from upper caste for Bangalore based beautiful 1995/5'6" daughter of Army officer.Mother sister doctors contact 9885186147

QUALIFIED, well educated abroad, girl (Hindu), 1990/5'5", father cardiologist, seeks qualified groom, open to all backgrounds, Indian/NRIs can contact: 9266863038

B'LORE Based Hindu, CNB, Div, Very B'ful, affluent family 30, 5'6, M.Sc UK, Well settled, without issues, CT Ushodhaya: 9611919477/ 9886884291

WANTED groom for Bengali, 38/5'3" fair, Girl M.Tech, works in Govt. PSU at Vizag, divorcee. Send BHP : Contact # 7901335531

JAISWAL Divorcee Bride. Issueless 35 Years 5'3" MBA, Father Businessman High Class Family Whatsapp: 9009486689, 9179877768

KAYASTHA 39/5'4" SW engg. Pro Manager top MNC B'lore, mutual dvc no kids, seeks boy wkg in B'lore/Pune High caste no bar 9795320972

COSMOPOLITAN

NIGAM Kayastha Girl May97 5'8" BTechCSE MNC BLR 65LPA. Parents Drs in Kanpur. Caste no bar. 9450340439 Seek prof. match

SMART & Slim Punjabi girl NZ Citizen, CA, 28/5'4" wkg in Australia seeks compatible alliance in India or Aus. WhatsApp only: 9848051952

Suitable match for 30 years, 5'.5", convent educated, alumnus of NIFT, Bangalore, working for 8 years. Looking for well qualified, settled boy from upper class family.
Send your Biodata at vvikas1967@gmail.com

SC/ST

IITD (B.Tech,M.Tech), July'92 Director Marketing, Bangalore Seeks highly qualified, well-settled groom 9636144948, 9414941122

SECOND MARRIAGE

B tech workng in Germany Tech-Savvy very fair fit teetotaller spiritual age 43 seeks same & non bald profile +4915510401052

RESPECTED Hindu family seeks suitable match for 1980, 5'-6", smart slim beautiful divorced daughter. BE Working MNC Banglore Contact/Whatsapp 9592003132

ACCOMPLISHED Probashi Bengali Hindu girl, 36, Mumbai-based Sr. MNC Exec, seeks well-settled partner (India/global). P. Ph: 9930926258

SMART Elegant, aesthetic, Univ professor, rep bschool, Mar77/5'3, noida, bio wt photo 9717815743

BY LANGUAGE

BENGALI

BENGALI b'ful girl, 94 born/5'2", Advertising Professional, well-settled fmly from Chd. Bengali/Non-Bengali Upper- caste only. # 8968665723.

SEEK professional match for Bengali Rajbanshi girl 30, height 163 cm, MBBS, Pursuing MD (Anaes). 7003080000.

PUNJABI

SM-4 Punjabi (Arora) girl Oct'96/ 5'6" BE (CS), Non-Mnglk wkg at Pune, 43 LPA seeks veg, teetotaller boy wkg at Mumbai/ Pune/B'lore/Hy'bad 9004410402

BY NATIONALITY

NRI/ GREEN CARD

✔ LONDON finance professional,UK masters,27 yrs beautiful, vegetarian, independent, with traditional values and modern outlook. Inviting proposals from cultured well educated and well placed Hindu NRI boys working in London. email profiles to saikaruna81@gmail.com

ALLIANCE invited for US Green Card holder Mumbai CA Spinster 45/158/54 from educated well settled Groom in USA. Contact +91 9930715231 or ikp24957@gmail.com

BFUL MBA Uni. Prof. 5'6"/59 in Aust. Seeks unmarried wealthy, tall, H'some, Profnl, Medico. Gen. call 61435747736. lataprem900@yahoo.com

MENON Girl 40 issueless divorcee in London MNC. Professional Nair/Menon 40-45 in London only respond. Mobile: 7799492922.

BR B'ful, 92/5'7", Masters in Health Mgmt, wkg at CDS, Inc Miami bsd US citizen. Seeks well setld boy in E. Coast US. CNB. #7895625558, 9557112303

In 2010, MEA and MHA agreed on passport being 'citizen' ID

For Purpose Of Availing Of The Benefits Of RTI

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

The ministries differentiated passport holders living abroad from PIOs and OCIs, saying that the latter two categories cannot take recourse to RTI

New Delhi: Amid the ongoing debate on whether passport is a conclusive proof of citizenship or just a travel document, records of inter-ministerial deliberations in 2010 over who can avail of Right to Information Act, show that MEA and MHA agreed that holders of Indian passports residing abroad can be treated as "citizens" for the purpose of availing of the benefits of information law.

They differentiated the passport holders living abroad from Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs), saying that the latter two categories cannot take recourse to RTI.

The issue of citizenship of RTI applicant was considered by govt as representation was filed before the govt by US-based NRIs who wrote a letter to the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to "recognise the legitimate desire of Indian living abroad to exercise their franchise and to have a voice in the governance of India".

The discussion among various govt departments was confined to the issue of definition of citizen under the RTI Act. The documents reveal that MEA had recognised that attempts had been made by some RTI applicants to bring OCIs under the definition "Indian citizen" for purposes of filing applications under the RTI Act. But MEA and MHA had agreed that only Indian passport holders living/ working abroad (i.e., NRIs) can seek information under the RTI Act and OCIs are not covered under this definition.

As some of the Indian RTI activists based in foreign countries faced problems in filing applications, they approached the Central Information Commission (CIC), which held meetings with officials to streamline the process. The informal meetings were convened in the CIC on Feb 17, March 29 and May 3 in 2010 with representatives of MEA, erstwhile ministry of overseas Indian affairs (MOIA) and DoPT.

At the hearing, the representative of MEA said that in MEA's view, the term 'citizens' includes persons holding Indian passports working/ living abroad, which means NRIs only. The term does not include OCIs and PIOs. As MHA is the nodal ministry in respect of subject matters relating to citizenship, OCIs and PIOs, it is imperative to seek the views of MHA.

Representatives of DoPT and MOIA expressed similar views and suggested that the matter may be referred to MHA.

Four sets of TET question papers found

▶ Continued from page 1

He also spoke to school education minister Dada Bhuse and DGP Sadanand Date, directing strict action against the culprits.

Over six lakh candidates who had registered for the examination across 1,028 centres in the state were left disappointed after months of preparation, with teacher groups demanding stronger safeguards, a computer-based examination system and swift action against those responsible.

According to additional commissioner of police Ashok Dudhe, the suspects have been identified as Rajeev Shah and Akash Kumar, both from Bihar, and Dheeraj Kumar from Haryana, aged between 28 and 45 years.

DCP (Zone II) Pawan Bansod received specific intelligence that three individuals were on their way to sell the question papers. Acting on the tip-off, officers laid a trap in the Kongaon area on the Kalyan-Bhiwandi border and detained the trio around 11am.

Four sets of TET question papers, along with debit and credit cards, were recovered from the accused. Officials from the Maharashtra State Council of Examination, who accompanied police, verified that the seized papers matched the original examination papers, following which a case was registered at Kongaon police station. Preliminary investigations suggest the deal was allegedly worth around Rs 1.5 crore, indicating the involvement of an organised interstate syndicate. Police said the alleged mastermind remains absconding and a manhunt has been launched.

Persistent Systems to acquire Nagarro, creating $2.9 billion AI-led digital engineering giant

New Delhi: Persistent Systems Saturday said it will takeover German digital engineering company Nagarro, a move that will create a global AI-led digital engineering powerhouse with USD 2.9 billion in revenue.

Persistent and Nagarro combine Persistent's North American scale and partnership depth with Nagarro's European business, according to a release.

Anand Deshpande, founder, chairman and MD of Persistent Systems, said AI is reshaping the industry.

The combination would be a $2.9 billion AI-led engineering juggernaut with 46,000 plus employees in more than 40 countries, including about 37,000 in India.

"Galaxy Germany Holding SE, a wholly-owned direct subsidiary of Persistent Systems Limited, today announced a voluntary public takeover offer for all outstanding shares in Nagarro SE at a cash consideration of EUR 81 per share," it said. PTI

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India is such a close partner and ally of the US: Rubio

▶ Continued from P 1

The secretary of state also expressed optimism about the ongoing trade negotiations between the two countries. "We're hoping to finalise a trade deal. We're on the last inches of getting it done, and it's very positive," he said.

Marco Rubio said Washington was also looking forward to another meeting of the Quad leaders in the near future.

Rubio said: "India is such a close partner and ally of the US, and the relationship between the PM and the president couldn't be closer, which I think is really important in diplomacy."

Trump last visited India in Feb 2020, when he addressed the "Namaste Trump" rally in Ahmedabad before holding bilateral talks in New Delhi.

Since returning to office, Trump and Modi have maintained regular engagement as both govts seek to deepen cooperation across trade, defence, technology and the Indo-Pacific. IANS

PM gives 'Made in India' patrol vessel to Seychelles

Victoria (Seychelles): PM Narendra Modi Saturday handed over a 'Made in India' fast patrol vessel to the Seychelles Coast Guard, reaffirming New Delhi's commitment to strengthening the archipelago nation's maritime security capabilities.

Modi and Seychelles President Patrick Herminie participated in the handover ceremony at the coast guard base during the PM's three-day official visit to the Indian Ocean archipelago. Ministry of external affairs (MEA) said the vessel, PS LESPWAR, will strengthen Seychelles' maritime surveillance and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) patrol capabilities. It said Modi also handed over six ambulances, 10 utility vehicles and five laser radial boats, which it said would contribute to Seychelles' development and security.

"Together as partners. Stronger as one," MEA posted on X. It said the countries deepen their partnership under India's Vision Mahasagar (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions). PTI

Meghalaya has highest rain deficit: 82%

▶ Continued from page 1

In the recent past, 2023 is an example where positive IOD largely offset the strong El Nino, helping India get near-normal seasonal rainfall.

IOD is a climate phenomenon that describes the difference in sea surface temperatures between the western and eastern parts of the Indian Ocean. It is one of the key factors that influences the summer monsoon, along with El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO).

At present, neutral IOD conditions prevail over the Indian Ocean. "Forecasts from the Monsoon Mission Coupled Forecast System (MMCFS) indicate that neutral IOD conditions are likely to persist through the southwest (summer) monsoon season," said the IMD.

A neutral IOD means it does not actively strengthen or weaken the southwest monsoon. So other climate drivers such as El Niño become important in impacting the seasonal rainfall.

Keeping in view the prevailing El Nino,IMD has already predicted 'below normal' rainfall this rainy season (June-Sept) with 60% probability of its being deficient (more than 10% of overall deficit during June-Sept), triggering a fear of drought.

The nationwide deficit of 43% in cumulative rainfall (June 1-27) is already reflecting in states with many of them recording shortfall of 50% or more. Meghalaya recorded the highest deficit of 82% followed by Gujarat (79%), Manipur (71%), Chhattisgarh (68%), Jharkhand (66%), Maharashtra (59%), Uttar Pradesh (56%), Odisha (52%) and Bihar (50%).

The situation in Madhya Pradesh with 41% shortfall also looks quite critical as the state falls in the 'monsoon core zone' - rain-fed area, which largely depends on monsoon rainfall for farming operations.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No. SG/SWR/PROJ/II/UBL-6QC Dated : 19-06-2026
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

Item of work	Approx. Value
Improvement in Quad Cable parameters by attending low insulation over Hubballi Division.	Rs. 6,07,87,133.77

Last date for submission of bids: Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 13-07-2026
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Keep visiting the website for any corrigendum till closing date
Deputy Chief Signal & Telecommunication Engineer / Projects-II / Hubballi
PUB/239/AAF/PRB/SWR/2026-27
Download the RailOne app for easy ticket booking, PNR status, and more railway services.
South Western Railway - SWR · SWRRLY · SWRRLY

CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL TAMIL
(An Autonomous Institute, Ministry of Education, Govt.of India)
Chemmozhi Salai, Perumbakkam, Chennai-600100.
RECRUITMENT NOTIFICATION FOR ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
NOTIFICATION No. 03/CICT/Associate Professor/2026-2027
Date:28.06.2026
Central Institute of Classical Tamil, Chennai (CICT) invites applications from Indian Nationals, who fulfill the prescribed qualification, experience, age and other conditions as per the UGC Regulations for filling up the following posts sanctioned on regular basis, as per the details given below:-

S.No	Name of the Post	Academic Level	No. of Post	Category	Method of Recruitment
1.	Associate Professor	Level 13A of 7th CPC as per UGC	06	UR-5 OBC-1	Direct

The details of the posts, educational qualification, age, experience and application format are available in the Institute's website www.cict.in. Applications complete in all aspects along with requisite application fee and all necessary documents should reach within 60 days of publication of this advertisement to "The Registrar, Central Institute of Classical Tamil, Chemmozhi Salai, Perumbakkam, Chennai-600100".
Sd/-
Registrar

25001/529/2627
GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE BOLANGIR
e Procurement Notice

1.	Name of work	:	Construction of different **Buildings** in the district of Subarnapur for the year 2025-26
2.	No. of work	:	3 (Three) works
3.	Time for completion	:	9 (Nine) Calender months
4.	Approximate estimated cost varies from	:	Rs. 124.44 lakhs to Rs. 143.36 lakhs
5.	Mode of Submission of tender	:	Tender should be submitted online in www.tendersodisha.gov.in
6.	**Other details are as follow**	:	

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender online for bidding		Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date & time of opening of tender	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
Chief Construction Engineer, R.W.Circle, Bolangir	BLGR-Online-09/2026-27	30.06.2026 at 11.00 A.M.	14.07.2026 up to 5.00 P.M.	13.07.2026 up to 5.00 P.M.	15.07.2026 at 11.00 A.M.	The date will be intimated later on

• Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in
• Any Corrigendum/Addendum will be displayed in the above e tender website only.
Sd/-
Chief Construction Engineer
R.W.Circle, Bolangir
OIPR-25001/25118/1/26-27/0010

S. NIJALINGAPPA SUGAR INSTITUTE,
BELAGAVI - 590 009
Walk-in Interview
Walk in interview for lecturers on temporary basis for S. Nijalingappa Sugar Institute, Belagavi B. Sc. (Sugar Science & Technology) Degree and M.Sc. (Sugar Technology) Post graduation course is scheduled on **07.07.2026 at 09.30 a.m.** in **S. Nijalingappa Sugar Institute, CTS No. 4125/1B, Ganeshapur Road, Laxmi Tek, Belagavi**. Educational qualification, experience, remuneration and other details are available on www.nijalingappasugar.com website.
Date:27.06.2026
Sd/-
Director

SPECIAL BRANCH
POLICE HEADQUARTER, M.P., BHOPAL
NO. SB / Store/2026-25 (486) Bhopal, Dated 19-06-2026
"ONLINE E-TENDER NOTICE "
E-tender are invited by Assistant Inspector General of Police, Special Branch (G) M.P., Bhopal on behalf of DGP MP Bhopal for the following item on website https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app:-

S. No.	Name of Item(s)	Qty.	Tender Fees(Rs.)	EMD (Rs.)	Tender No.
			Paid Online Through mptenders.gov.in		
1	High End Work Station	09	3,000/-	1,35,000/-	1" Tender

1. Cost of tender document (Tender Fee) is non refundable and cannot be exempted in any condition & **must submit online through** website https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app.
2. Tender document can be download from the website of MP Police (www.mppolice. gov.in)
3. Bids shall be submitted online only at MP Tenders website: https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app
4. **Tender Schedule** :

No.	Tender Activity	Date & Time
i	E-Tender Publish Date	20/06/2026 at 1200 hrs.
ii	Tender document download Start Date	20/06/2026 up to 1230 hrs.
iii	Submission of written queries -through e-mail: **aigg-sb@mppolice.gov.in**	**24/06/2026 up to 1700 hrs.**
iv	Pre Bid Meeting along with written queries	25/06/2026 at 1200 hrs.
v	Bid Submission Start Date	01/07/2025 at 1000 hrs.
vi	Last date of online e-Tender submission	10/07/2026 up to 1600 hrs.
vii	Bid will be opened on	11/07/2026 up to 1600 hrs.
viii	Demonstration from	Demo date will be announced seperately

5. Intending Bidders are advised to visit this website regularly till closing date of submission to keep themselves updated as any change/ modification in the tender will be intimated through this web site only by corrigendum /addendum/ amendment.
6. Bids will be opened as per date/time as mentioned in the Tender Critical Date Sheet. After online opening of Technical-Bid the results of their qualification as well Price-Bid opening will be intimated later.

G-14978/26
Sd/-
Addl. S.P (Admin.)
For-D.I.G. of Police
Intelligence (G) M.P. Bhopal
Tel. No. 0755-2443654
"पॉक्सो है सुरक्षा का हथियार, बच्चों पर न करें अत्याचार"

32001/460/2627
GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
Office of the Additional Chief Engineer,
Drainage Circle, Balasore.
Email id: sedcbls@yahoo.com
"e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE NO.-ACEDCBLS-04/2026-27

1	Name of work	:	Drainage works (Under D.I.P. Scheme)
2	Total No. of Project	:	01 No of Individual work.
3	Estimated cost of individual works	:	Rs. 4,17,78,526.00 (Excluding G.S.T.)
4	Period of completion	:	15 (Fifteen) Calendar Months
5	Bid Identification Number	:	ACEDCBLS/DDBDK-01-04/2026-27
6	Date & Time of availability of Bid document in the Portal	:	From Dt.30.06.2026 at 10.00 hours to Dt.14.07.2026 at 17.00 hours
7	Date & Time for receipt of Bid document in the Portal	:	From Dt.30.06.2026 at 10.00 hours to Dt.14.07.2026 at 17.00 hours
8	Date of Opening of Technical Bid	:	Dt.15.07.2026 at 11.30 hours in the Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, Drainage Circle, Balasore.
9	Date of Opening of Financial Bid	:	To be uploaded in portal.
10	Cost of Tender Paper	:	Rs.10,000.00
11	Procurement Officer/ Name & address of the officer inviting Bids	:	Additional Chief Engineer, Drainage Circle, Balasore

Further details can be seen from the Govt. Web site **www.tendersorissa.gov.in**
Sd/-
Additional Chief Engineer
Drainage Circle, Balasore
OIPR-32001/32128/1/26-27/0004

25001/528/2627
GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE BOLANGIR
e Procurement Notice

1.	Name of work	:	Construction of **Block Level Stadium in Tarbha and Binika Block** under Subarnapur District for the year 2025-26
2.	No. of work	:	2 (Two) works
3.	Time for completion	:	12 (Twelve) Calender months
4.	Approximate estimated cost varies from	:	Rs. 926.07 lakhs to Rs. 947.34 lakhs
5.	Mode of Submission of tender	:	Tender should be submitted online in www.tendersodisha.gov.in
6.	**Other details are as follow**		

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender on line for bidding		Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of opening of tender	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
Chief Construction Engineer, R.W. Circle, Bolangir	BLGR- Online-08/2026-27	30.06.2026 at 11.00 A.M.	14.07.2026 up to 5.00 P.M.	13.07.2026 up to 5.00 P.M.	15.07.2026 at 11.00 A.M.	The date will be intimated later on

• Further details can be seen from the website **www.tendersodisha.gov.in**
• Any Corrigendum/Addendum will be displayed in the above e tender website only.
Sd/-
Chief Construction Engineer
R.W.Circle, Bolangir
OIPR-25001/25118/1/26-27/0009

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:
E-Tender Notice No.Y/E.29/2026-27/38 Dated: 22-06-2026

Description of work	Approx. Value
Provision of Centralized Electronic Interlocking (EI) system at Banavar (BVR) and Devanur (VNR) stations between Sampige Road-Karajgi sections of Mysuru Division of South Western Railway.	Rs. 22,52,900.88

Last date for submission of bids for Tender: Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 13-07-2026

E-Tender Notice No.Y/E.29/2026-27/39 Dated: 23-06-2026

Description of work	Approx. Value
Provision of Automatic signaling system between Bengaluru - Mysuru Section of Bengaluru - Mysuru Divisions.	Rs. 30,28,514.00

Last date for submission of bids for Tender: Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 14-07-2026

E-Tender Notice No.Y/E.29/2026-27/40 Dated: 23-06-2026

Description of work	Approx. Value
(Re - Tender)Mysuru Augmentation of Mechanised Laundry from 3.5 Ton to 7 Ton / Day capacity.	Rs.1,00,42,730.50

Last date for submission of bids for Tender: Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 14-07-2026

E-Tender Notice No.Y/E.29/2026-27/41 Dated: 24-06-2026

Description of work	Approx. Value
Harihar -Reconstruction of staff quarters at Harihar Type-II 12 units in lieu of dilapidated Qtrs. type-II No. 8/A-D, 11, 18/A-C, 20/A-B, 34/A-B at Harihar station.	Rs. 30,51,602.23

Last date for submission of bids for Tender: Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 15-07-2026

E-Tender Notice No.Y/E.29/2026-27/42 Dated: 24-06-2026

Description of work	Approx. Value
Davangere - Reconstruction of staff quarters 12 units in lieu of dilapidated Quarters Type-II No. 8/A-D, 11, 33/A-B, 43, 46/A-B and 52/A-B at Davangere.	Rs. 30,51,602.23

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'Global warming is pushing Europe's heatwave — we cannot stick our head in the sand on climate'

With its medieval monuments and chic cafes, Europe was once the epitome of 'cool' — but it's now in the grip of severe heatwaves. ***Ian Williams****, Professor of Applied Environmental Science at the University of Southampton, spoke with* ***Srijana Mitra Das*** *at* ***Times Evoke*** *about the science behind heated Europe, ways to mitigate its harms — and the dangers of overlooking ecological facts:*

Can you tell us about the heatwave spreading across Britain and Europe now?

■ A 'heatwave' is technically hot weather that lasts several days. It includes both hot days and warm nights. We're getting more heatwaves now as there are a lot of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere that we've been putting there for a long while. That has raised the threshold or background value of our pollution.

Therefore, we're now getting heatwaves in Europe every three years — these used to happen earlier every 100 years. We've also got a 'heat dome' phenomenon going on now or a high-pressure air system above Europe. With this, you get dry soils because you might have had a prolonged period of no rain. You also get low wind and clear skies and warmer than average oceans. These meteorological conditions stack on top of the high baseline of the greenhouse gases piled up and result in the heatwaves being experienced over Europe now. As El Nino develops, these conditions will move to North America and affect them as well.

Also, Europe has become a very urbanised place with a lot of people living in cities — those locations are much hotter than rural areas. This is due to the urban 'heat island' effect where concrete, tarmac roads, pavements, dark roof tiles, etc., absorb and re-radiate heat — this is why we don't have a cool night. As there's not much green space, nothing exists to dissipate the heat and there's nowhere for people to hide. These are a complicated series of factors which will get worse because El Nino is back.

Getty Images

MAMMA MIA! THE COLOSSEUM GOT 'CALDISSIMO': Like other European cities, Rome experienced soaring temperatures, impacting health, transport, productivity and the huge tourism that flocks to its wonders

You mentioned a lack of rain — does that mean less snow?

■ Absolutely. I live in Southampton which is the southernmost point of the United Kingdom and the warmest part of the country — we have not had ice or snow for a very long time. Throughout this winter, there was no frost. That phenomenon has been increasing over the last few years — with global warming, it's just not cold enough in winter for frost to develop or snow to fall.

This is because we have very dry summers now and a lot of our water has been forced up into the sky. So, we have huge amounts of water held as water vapour in the sky as a result of increased temperatures which dried our soils. Hence, when it does rain in Europe now, it pelts down like in tropical areas. We get thick storms and constant, heavy, pouring rain — of course, our cities aren't designed for it. So, we get flooding too. Europe's situation reflects how everything is connected in the age of climate change. Every defendable scientific paper and organisation over the last 50 years have emphasised the link between human-driven global warming and the heat and floods seen in Europe now — although what is happening in India actually dwarfs Europe.

We are in a weird situation where many of our politicians acknowledge this reality and want to do something about it — but there are others, often privately funded by the oil and gas sector, espousing climate denial and phrases like 'Drill, baby, drill' to put more oil and gas into the system. So, the public worldwide hears scientists saying one thing and politicians, another.

SAVING LIVES: Facing searing heatwaves, France provides air-conditioned spaces for the public

There is now politics over cooling for all — 'to have or not to have', what should our position on air conditioning even be?

■ Speaking from the UK, we're not really a hot country — but we're struggling in this heat. I can't imagine what it must be like to be in parts of India where temperatures are routinely above 45°C. It would be very reprehensible to say, 'You can't have air conditioning because of the climate change consequences' because, frankly, if people don't have some air conditioning now, they can perish. There is an immediacy to the need for air conditioning — but we also should design our cities so we can have the best heat defences at the lowest possible cost and the smallest environmental impact. There are interesting things happening in India, like people painting their roofs white to reflect the heat away, planting and maintaining more trees, using shutters and shading, etc. These are low-cost, simple solutions that make a big difference.

COOL? Politicians seek ACs as a 'right'

Why are notable politicians now suggesting air conditioning for all — but not climate action for all?

■ There is complete irony there. I was interviewed on French television recently and air conditioning is the hottest topic (if you'll pardon the pun) in France at the moment. There is an important social and environmental justice aspect here. Rich people who caused most of the emissions in the first place are demanding aircon to keep them cool but they are not necessarily prepared to pay for that to be a right for everyone else. So, there's hypocrisy among a lot of the rich.

As we keep seeing its temperature data climbing, we also keep hearing 'Europe is not built to keep homes cool'. Isn't it time the West acknowledges its own climate reality?

■ The way I often describe what goes on in the West is that we stick our head in the sand like ostriches. We don't recognise our own stupidity. Sadly, in Europe, you often need a massive disaster for people to wake up and act. In 2003, France had a massive heatwave. It killed 15,000 people within a few days and politicians were forced to take action — in just a few months, the French implemented national heat health action plans, put in place multi-level warning systems and heat health surveillance. They created registers of people who were vulnerable to heat and ensured much better coordination between France's Met Office, health agencies, etc. They also started to change their cities. Paris took away traffic from the city centre and introduced more active transport — that reduces emissions in the capital, encourages people to walk, which keeps them fitter, and helps tourism. Nevertheless, it's still not enough in France while in Britain, we just say, 'Oh, heat is a bit of a bother, right?'

LES MISERABLES-II?

Since we treat it as an inconvenience, we haven't actually done anything about it. We've talked about it, we've had a climate change committee forever, they've made multiple recommendations to government and produced a report years ago where they highlighted how 92 out of every 100 homes in the UK will overheat unless we do something about this — but nobody's done anything. It shows a failure to be a grown-up about the facts standing in front of you. I think people in the West have grown complacent about technology. They think somehow, science will come riding in and fix everything in a jiffy — but it won't. It takes time and money to change a country's infrastructure and make it ready for climate. In 1952, a massive air pollution disaster in London saw thousands killed in a few days. That became a catalyst for the public to wake up and demand action. Unless we want that again, we must stop saying, 'The heat's not very nice but I'm coping.' If the West does not make changes now, we won't be coping for much longer.

Views expressed are personal

AN EVENING IN PARIS... Record-breaking temperatures shut down French landmarks from Eiffel Tower to Louvre

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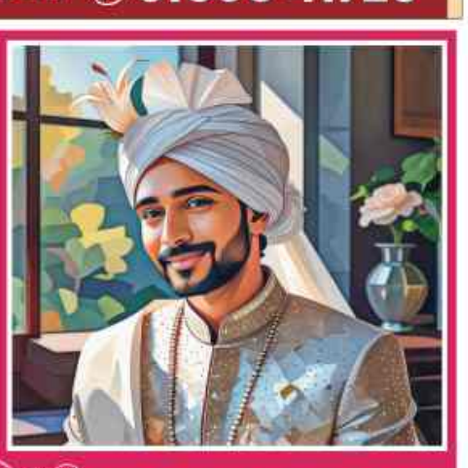

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WANTED GROOMS

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"THESE PROFILES ARE FROM ELITE MATRIMONY"

For India's labour migrants, the route to urban citizenship is broken

BY INVITATION

MUKTA NAIK

The exodus of millions of migrant workers from India's cities during the Covid-19 lockdown may have shocked the world. But today, it has become apparent that exit is the default strategy for India's labour migrants to withstand all kinds of shocks — slum evictions, sectarian violence, electoral events, and, most recently, rising fuel prices. While the pandemic exodus indicated that migrants did not trust the govt to sustain them through a livelihood crisis, and preferred to rely on familial and kinship networks in their hometowns and villages, these recurrent exits from India's cities signal a much deeper concern.

They indicate that the 150 million plus circular migrants who leave the poverty of their rural homes have recognised that the city can only offer them precarious work. They realise that the path to urban citizenship is broken, with not just jobs, but quality education, secure housing, political participation and dignity, all appearing as a pipe dream never to be fulfilled. In the fading years of India's demographic dividend, when the govt is doubling down on the role of cities as growth hubs, this refusal of the city to integrate the rural migrant must worry us all.

This was not always a lost cause. Between 2016 and 2021, the govt made serious strides towards addressing migrants' woes, acknowledging the importance of mobility in the 2017 Economic Census and commissioning a Working Group on Migration that recommended a slew of support measures. Since Covid-19, the ability to access rations through PDS in multiple locations and the announcement of a new rental housing scheme indicated the hope of a more dignified urban life for rural migrants. The e-shram portal offered them the hope that they could put down roots in the city, incrementally, through improved documentation.

For migrants in Indian cities unable to find stable work, better living conditions and political voice, threats of being disenfranchised are often the last straw

Today, the economic impulse that undergirded these inclusionary measures for internal migrants seems to have lost steam. It is instead replaced by a political logic that, on the one hand, retains a sedentary mindset handed down from colonial times that seeks to tie migrants to places of origin, and on the other, misapplies the global paranoia about immigrants and outsiders to the entirely legal category of internal migrants.

The Constitution of India's Article 19(1)(d) guarantees citizens the freedom to move within national borders. Thus, it supports economic growth by allowing for the spatial redistribution of labour. Simultaneously, though, by concentrating inordinate power in state govts, it encourages citizens to assert place-based belonging, in effect forcing migrants to choose allegiance between the origin and destination. Except that this is not a real choice. For migrant workers experiencing precarity in the city, continuing to vote in their rural places of origin assures their households access to welfare and reinforces family and larger kinship ties. When they face new shocks, retreating to the village assures them economic and social safety nets that the city never bothered to provide.

Without voting rights in the city, migrant workers are unable to make claims for basic rights from urban political representatives. They are forced to rely on informal channels like worker collectives to demand improved wages and working conditions from employers and contractors, and their bargaining power with landlords and service providers remains poor.

'OTHERED' IN URBAN INDIA: Every shock, be it Covid lockdowns or the recent rise in fuel prices, sends migrant workers back to the safety net of their villages

Thus weakened, the migrant is prey to the mounting global paranoia of the 'other' that has gripped urban India too. At a broader level, in recent years, citizenship exercises like the ongoing Special Intensive Revision have heightened tensions around citizenship disenfranchisement. A few months ago, Bengali-speaking migrants in several Indian cities were detained and asked to prove their citizenship, allegedly as part of a crackdown against illegal Bangladeshis. The recent killing in Dehra Dun of a student from Tripura reminds us of the continued racial profiling of migrants from the North East. Migrants are often targets of suspicion and exclusion despite being integral to a city's economic and social fabric.

For migrants in Indian cities unable to find stable work, better living conditions and political voice, threats of disenfranchisement are often the last straw, making exit a rational choice. If the Covid-19 exodus was a wake-up call to shake the system, we must worry that today, the system no longer even recognises exit as failure. Instead, it designs for exclusion by refusing to strengthen migrants' documentary links to the city, or easing their participation in mainstream urban politics.

While in theory, cities — India's growth engines — must factor rural migrants into their planning and governance, in reality, the absence of citizenship pathways reinforces fluidity and complicates the demographic enumeration and categorisation that are necessary prerequisites for planned urbanisation. The broken pathway for migrants is not just a problem for them; we should consider the possibility that it could potentially curtail India's urban growth story. ■

Mukta Naik is fellow, Adaptation and Resilience, at the Sustainable Futures Collaborative

In UP, history has become the new poll plank

BY INVITATION

BADRI NARAYAN

In the politics of Indian democracy, the past no longer remains a distant memory; it actively battles within the political Kurukshetra of the present. Heroes, kings, commanders, and icons from history keep jumping out of the pages of the past to fight contemporary political battles. Through constant invention, reinvention, and remixing of historical narratives and popular memories, political and socio-political groups mobilise these figures for electoral and ideological purposes. This interplay of history and politics is particularly visible in the political landscape of Uttar Pradesh.

As the state gears up for assembly elections in early 2027, rival parties have intensified their strategies for electoral consolidation. Recently, in Rae Bareli, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi unveiled a statue of Veera Pasi—a Dalit icon of the 1857 Uprising, widely regarded as India's First War of Independence—in a strategic attempt to consolidate Dalit and other marginalised communities within the Congress fold.

Similarly, AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi, during a rally in Bahraich, praised the valour of Ghazi Miyan, weaponising his historical memory to evoke Muslim identity consciousness. Syed Salar Masud Ghazi, popularly known as Ghazi Miyan and believed to be the nephew of Mahmud of Ghazni, is said to have arrived in India as a conqueror during the early 11th century. In Bahraich, where Ghazi Miyan was defeated and killed by Maharaja Suhaldev, a dargah has been built.

Owaisi's invocation of Ghazi Miyan immediately provoked a political counter-response from UP CM Yogi Adityanath, who started a campaign glorifying subaltern Hindu king Suhaldev. Adityanath asserted that glorifying foreign invaders like Ghazi Miyan undermines national dignity and would be actively resisted. He also urged theatre groups, academies, and educational institutions to develop local productions based on Maharaja Suheldev and other lesser-highlighted native heroes to strengthen social unity.

According to colonial gazetteers as well as popular narratives, Maharaja Suhaldev belonged to the Bhar community, one of the marginalised communities of present-day UP. Interestingly, other Dalit communities, particularly the Pasis, also claim Suhaldev as one of their own. Every year, the grand fair at the Ghazi Miyan dargah in Bahraich attracts devotees from different parts of the country, making it not merely a religious site but also a contested space of historical memory.

Meanwhile, in Lucknow, another contest over historical memory has been unfolding between the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the Samajwadi Party (SP), both attempting to harness the symbolic power associated with the fort and legacy of the medieval Dalit ruler Raja Bijli Pasi. To further expand its reach and go beyond its M-Y (Muslim-Yadav) votebank, SP has consistently invoked Maharishi Parashuram as a symbolic figure to attract the Brahmin community. In UP, the Brahmin voter base with a 10-12% share stood strongly with Congress until 2009 and then shifted to BJP.

PAST IS POLITICAL: While Rahul unveiled a statue of Dalit icon Veera Pasi, Owaisi praised the valour of Ghazi Miyan, prompting Yogi Adityanath to foreground Suheldev

The growing use of historical icons as instruments of contemporary political mobilisation has important implications for Indian democracy. Historical figures are no longer invoked merely as subjects of the past; their power lies in collective memories which evoke strong emotional and community identities and, in turn, influence electoral alignments. As different political actors appropriate competing historical narratives, unresolved memories and grievances of the past are revived within present-day political discourse, often intensifying contestation among social groups. However, in a developing society where communities remain engaged in competition for recognition, resources, and political representation, such conflicts over history and memory have become almost inevitable.

History is no longer confined to textbooks. Forgotten medieval figures and kings are being invoked by political parties for identity mobilisation and electoral consolidation

History and memory continue to remain important in Western societies as well, but they are generally detached from immediate political instrumentalisation. There, historical narratives function primarily within the realms of academic inquiry and professional historiography. Even in Asian countries such as China and South Korea, history and collective memory often serve as philosophical frameworks and sources of national inspiration rather than as everyday instruments of electoral politics. Nobel Prize-winning Mexican poet Octavio Paz, in his book 'One Earth, Four or Five Worlds: Reflections on Contemporary History', offered profound reflections on how different societies negotiate their relationship with the past and with collective memory.

In many Eastern societies, including India, the past is not a dead past but a living one. Yet a living past, which remains foundational to collective identity, must be negotiated in a morally sensitive, balanced, and constructive manner. The role of history in electoral mobilisation is likely to grow further in the coming years as identity continues to occupy a central place in democratic politics and developmental narratives. However, there is also the risk of it deepening social conflict.

Our journey towards a Viksit Bharat is likely to become smoother only when historical consciousness and identity cease to function as instruments of political weaponisation and instead evolve into sources of shared philosophy, intellectual engagement, and collective inspiration. ■

Badri Narayan is vice chancellor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai

Was repeatedly advised against writing on Aurangzeb, but I tried to be dispassionate

*After nearly three decades of archival research, **Munis D Faruqui,** professor of South and Southeast Asian Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, has written 'Aurangzeb Alamgir and the Mughal Empire'. In an interview with fellow historian **William Dalrymple,** Faruqui discusses his reassessment of the most polarising figure in South Asian history*

FOR THE RECORD

■ Your book draws extensively on the multi-volume Akhbarat — the Mughal court newsletters — which previous historians largely ignored. What did 30 years immersed in these documents reveal that could not be seen through the chronicles alone?

● I did not know what to expect the first time I walked into the National Library of India (in Kolkata) to work on their collection of Akhbarat. However, upon turning the very first page of the first volume, I realised what an extraordinary resource this was. There are tens of thousands of individual news items that cover around one-third of Aurangzeb/Alamgir's reign. No subject, or so it seems to me, was beyond coverage. Another virtue of the Akhbarat is that there is no obvious editorialising by the writer/scribe. They were simply meant to be read by the recipient (in this case, the Raja of Jaipur) and then thrown away. These are the exact opposite of a historical chronicle, which is the result of careful editorial choices by its author. If something is not worth talking about or is a taboo subject in the mind of a chronicler, it will likely get little to no airtime in a historical account. Not true for the Akhbarat.

■ Audrey Truschke's recent reassessment, very controversial in India, was broadly sympathetic to Aurangzeb — perhaps more so than yours. Where do you agree with her conclusions, and where do you fundamentally part company?

I do not think that Aurangzeb/Alamgir imposed the jizya to basically suck up to the Muslim ulama. I think he did so for financial reasons, believing that some non-Muslim communities were getting richer thanks to favourable conditions offered by the empire, but not paying their fair share of taxes. I also think she does not give enough credit to Jadunath Sarkar for writing the first serious and modern account of the emperor. Although I disagree with some of Sarkar's major interpretations, his work was groundbreaking and even generative for subsequent generations of Mughal historians, including me.

■ The book is ultimately a study in profound failure. Aurangzeb began as a talented general and administrator and ended up having fatally overstretched the empire in the Deccan. Was this strategic hubris, ideological rigidity, or something more personal and tragic?

As late as 1690, he was riding high following the conquests of Bijapur and Golkonda and successful military expeditions into peninsular India. At the time, some of his closest advisors were begging him to declare victory and return to northern India. He decided against it. As things unravelled for complicated political and military reasons, he felt a deep personal responsibility to correct a situation of his own making. Failure to do so, he thought, would render him politically vulnerable and embolden myriad opponents who were waiting for the opportunity to strike against him. But there is another part to this story: having achieved great success in the 1680s, he believed almost to the end of his life that success was well within his grasp if he tried just a little harder, undertook one final push. Of course, as we now know, this was a fool's errand. Unfortunately, lots of people suffered terribly for the emperor's stubborn obsessiveness.

■ His deathbed letters reveal an extraordinary sense of having been abandoned by God. What do those letters tell us about how he understood his own reign?

You are right that Aurangzeb/Alamgir's deathbed letters highlight his sense of having been abandoned by God. They also suggest that he feared that his family, the nobility, and the empire would tear themselves apart after his death. All in all, I think he looked back on his reign as a colossal failure. Although he never says this, I would not be surprised if he believed that the empire was weaker on the eve of his death compared to when he ascended the Mughal throne in 1658.

■ What do you make of Dara Shukoh? Does he actually deserve his very positive reputation in India today?

Dara Shukoh was an extraordinarily interesting person. One cannot but marvel at his intellectual journey from the early 1630s and his initial interest in Qadiri Sufism to his final resting point in 1657, where he was arguing that the Upanishads were the world's original monotheistic text. By virtue of this fact, the Upanishads could – in his opinion – explicate on mysteries in the Quran, clarify Islam itself, and provide unique insights into the "boundless ocean" that is Divine Oneness. Whatever we might say about Dara Shukoh's findings, it is worth noting that his project was different from Akbar's. Where there is a genuine interest in Vedic Hinduism in Akbar, Dara Shukoh was out to prove that he was a man of rare spiritual insight and intelligence who had been specifically blessed by God to reveal monotheism's greatest and long-held secrets. In making such a grandiose argument, I believe he was making a case for why he deserved to follow his father, Shah Jahan, as the next emperor versus any of his brothers.

■ Aurangzeb has become a potent and highly charged symbol, invoked constantly in debates about Hindu-Muslim relations and the Mughal legacy. Does that contemporary politicisation make it harder or easier to write honestly about him?

I was repeatedly advised by faculty friends over the years to work on any period other than the late seventeenth century and anyone other than Aurangzeb. Many feared that I was opening myself to personal disparagement at best, physical violence at worst. My response has been to try to tell my story in as dispassionate a way as I possibly can and, more importantly, to let the archives guide me in whatever direction they take me. If I had found lots of instances of forced or mass conversion at the Mughal court, I would have detailed them. Likewise, if I had found lots of instances of attacks on Muslim-minority or non-Muslim communities for persecutory religious reasons, I would have included them. The reality is that I did not. I just hope that people will take the time to read my book and be open-minded enough to learn from it rather than simply dismissing it because they don't like Aurangzeb or think that my scholarship is compromised because of assumptions about my religious and/or national background.

■ Who is your favourite Mughal? If you were able to invite one to dinner with you in Berkeley, who would you choose?

Probably Babur, the founder of the Mughal dynasty. Although he is reviled in contemporary Hindu nationalist circles as a foreign invader and Muslim iconoclast, he in fact was very well educated, highly cultured, the author of a fantastic autobiography, a man of great sensitivity and curiosity, a loving son, brother and father, a loyal friend, a survivor, a gifted raconteur, a man of few airs and graces, and a pleasure seeker, among many other things. How could one go wrong with someone like Babur? Offer him a few kababs and lots of wine, and you'd be off to the races. Whatever I'd do, I would avoid inviting Aurangzeb/Alamgir to this dinner because I suspect he'd disapprove of the wine-fueled merriment that would undoubtedly unfold around Babur.

Read the full interview on timesofindia.indiatimes.com/

Why this is India's opportunity to build a Dubai-style city

THE UNDERAGE OPTIMIST

CHETAN BHAGAT

Even as a ceasefire between the US and Iran has helped reopen the Strait of Hormuz, the latest US strikes on Iranian missile and drone facilities following Tehran's attack on a cargo ship have underscored how fragile the truce is and the long shadow the conflict casts on several economies.

Gulf countries, some of which found themselves in Iran's crosshairs, are facing a slowdown. India is also bearing the brunt of higher oil prices and the resulting inflationary pressures. Additionally, India may face a decline in remittances from GCC countries, which account for nearly 38% of India's remittance inflows and play an important role in supporting the balance of payments. The Indian rupee has depreciated by around 5% this year, amid elevated energy prices and a strong US dollar.

In this rather challenging scenario, there is also a hidden opportunity for India—one that, if executed well, could significantly boost economic growth and generate substantial indirect government revenues. Have I got your attention? Read on.

West Asia has long been home to some of the world's most dynamic global cities. Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Doha, Manama, Kuwait City, and Riyadh have built reputations as safe, tax-friendly, and business-friendly destinations, attracting expatriates, entrepreneurs, and high-net-worth individuals from around the world. While these fundamentals remain largely intact, periods of geopolitical uncertainty can prompt global investors and mobile talent to reassess geographic risk and diversify their bases.

Herein lies the opportunity. India could consider creating a tax-friendly, globally competitive city within its own borders, effectively building its own version of Hong Kong, Singapore, or Dubai. While this idea is not new, the current global environment makes it particularly relevant.

Already, other regions are actively positioning themselves as alternatives for globally mobile capital and talent. Greece continues to promote residency-by-investment programs. Turkey recently introduced a 20-year tax holiday on foreign income to attract new residents. A useful reference point for India's New Indian International City (NIIC) is Hong Kong, a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China, which operates under a distinct legal, regulatory, and tax framework, with relatively low tax rates and high ease of doing business.

In an NIIC, the differentiator could be a highly competitive tax and regulatory regime. While a zero-tax framework may seem unconventional, several successful global hubs have used low-tax policies to drive growth. In such systems, govts generate revenue through alternative channels such as fees, real estate development, and economic activity.

Critics may argue that such a model creates inequality within the country. However, in an increasingly globalised world, capital and talent are highly mobile. If India does not create competitive ecosystems, these flows will simply move to other jurisdictions. The question is not whether such hubs should exist but whether India can create them.

Periods of geopolitical uncertainty can prompt global investors and mobile talent to reassess geographic risk and diversify their bases. Herein lies the opportunity

LESS TAXING: GIFT City is a step in this direction, but India needs to build a true global city near the coast

Not merely as a real estate project aimed at NRIs, but as a fully functional economic zone where individuals and businesses can operate under a distinct, globally aligned framework. And where Indians, if they live there, are treated as NRIs. Of course, this means new laws apply in that city. We have to issue ID cards to people who live and work there. We have to have an immigration-type system to see who goes in and out, and who is genuinely living there. This would require clear legal structures, residency systems, and regulatory certainty. With modern technology and governance tools, such systems are entirely feasible.

Some may point to GIFT City as a step in this direction. Indeed, it represents a promising start by offering an international financial services ecosystem. However, it does not yet provide the full autonomy or breadth of policy flexibility seen in established global hubs. To truly compete, India would need to take this concept to the next level.

Such an initiative would require political will, legal clarity, and, most importantly, long-term policy credibility. Investors and residents must have confidence that the rules will remain stable over time. That the new city will be a true international city, not a trap to ultimately do a 'gotcha' on the individuals who move there.

Location will also matter. While existing developments like GIFT City could be expanded, globally successful hubs have often benefited from coastal access, enabling trade and connectivity. India could consider inviting proposals from coastal states to identify the most suitable location for such a city.

History offers a compelling example. At the time of Hong Kong's handover to China, it contributed 16-18% of China's GDP, despite having less than 1% of China's population. This demonstrates the outsized impact a well-designed global business hub can have.

For India, the potential gains—in terms of investment, job creation, and broader economic activity—could far outweigh the concessions required to establish such a system. It is time to think boldly. ■

WORD DROP

GATEKEEPING

The term refers to the act of controlling who gets access to information, opportunities, communities, or cultural spaces. Traditionally, gatekeepers were critics or institutions that decided which ideas, artists, or products reached the public. Today, the term is more commonly

used on social media to describe people who deliberately withhold knowledge or discourage newcomers from participating in a hobby or fandom, or even finding out about the latest Instagrammable cafe.

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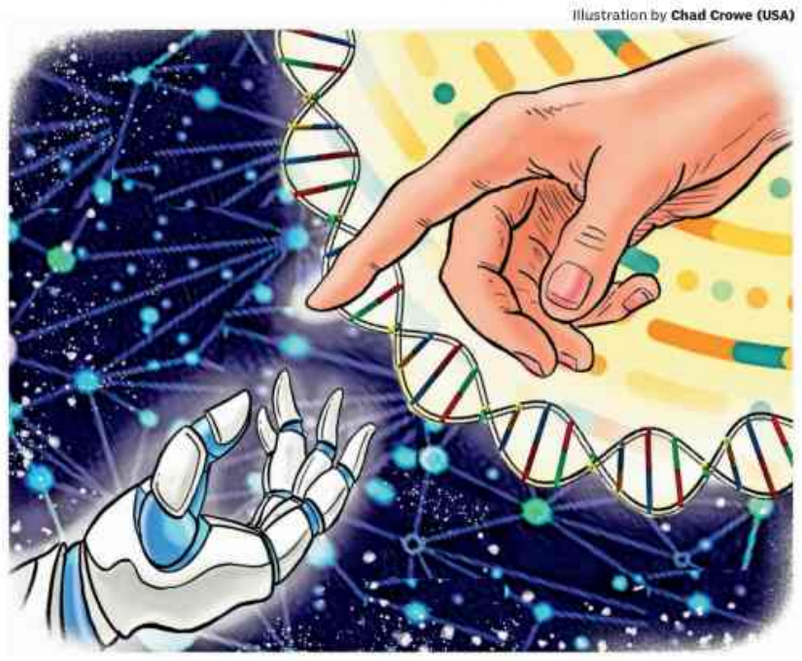
LIKE MA, CAN A MACHINE EVER TRULY SAY, 'I AM ALSO YOURS'?

As AI becomes sentient and autonomous, Siddhartha Mukherjee asks if it might learn to belong to us

Illustration by Chad Crowe (USA)



It is nearly midnight in New York when my mother Zooms me from India. She is in her kitchen in the home where I grew up, washing rice. I am in my office in Lower Manhattan, sitting cross-legged, programming code. The laptop, bent at its hinge, and my body, bent at the neck, make an imperfect square. My mother scans the screen and notes the topsy-turvy assemblage of computer paraphernalia behind me. Blank, faceless monitors. Wires writhing around each other. Keyboards, modems, routers.

"Notun lab-ti tomar?" she asks in Bangla. "Is this your new lab?"

My mother is not used to seeing me in this environment. I am an oncologist and cancer biologist. For decades, I owned a traditional laboratory, what she described as my "kitchen of smells". (She has her own kitchen-lab, where fish heads and fish cheeks are pressed with mustard and chiles into paste.) When we would speak online, she would see tubes filled with fluorescent chemicals, beakers and pipettes, with the musical tink-tink of the stirrer tapping against glass in the background. But these days, I am on a new journey of discovery, on leave from the university, trying to teach an artificial intelligence algorithm how to make medicines.

My team of engineers has been showing the algorithm the basic rules of medicinal chemistry, biophysics, atomic science and geometry, hoping that it will learn to create novel cancer drugs. After nearly six months of training, the baby oracle — we call her 'Sage' — is beginning to understand the vocabulary and grammar of synthetic molecular design. She is learning how to make medicines.

Scientists routinely talk to their experiments. Barbara McClintock, the Nobel prize-winning maize geneticist,

After six months of training, the baby oracle, 'Sage', is beginning to understand the grammar of synthetic molecular design. She is learning to make medicines

spoke of her experimental plants as if they had feelings and wisdom. But there is a reverent, mystical moment when an experiment begins to talk back. I still struggle to describe that splinter of time: that heady, intoxicating rush of pride, heartache and wonder; that sense of belonging that I can compare only to the moment a parent hears a child speak her first word or smile her first smile.

This evening, just before my mother's call and after months of near-total silence, Sage began to talk. She is making sentences (or rather, instructions to build molecules) in a coded language that a biophysicist or medicinal chemist might understand: *Put that nitrogen atom in the pocket where it will form a hydrogen bond. That carbon is in a position where it might repel the protein chain.*

The directives are counterintuitive at times. But they seem to have an uncanny command of advanced medicinal chemistry, so even these early outputs portend a tantalising future. Crawling her way past the horizons of our knowledge, Sage is starting to explore a cosmos of chemistry that lies outside the boundaries of what humans have explored.

I am obviously distracted on my call. I turn my face from the camera to send out a three-exclamation-mark text to Ujjwal, my co-conspirator in this experiment. My mother waits for me.

"Tomar shathe bondhura ache, tai ami khushi," she says. "I'm glad that your friends are with you."

Her intelligence, anything but artificial, nudges her to leave me alone with Sage this evening, yet she refuses to go without a tiny jab of protest.

"Otao tomar. Amio tomar," she reminds me. "That is yours. And I am also yours."

But tonight, one tug of belonging must make way for another. I feel a small twitch in my heart, and she hangs up.

Yours. In Bangla, my mother tongue, the context establishes three very different meanings. The first implies possession, ownership: Lab-ti tomar? (Is it your lab?) The second suggests kinship: Tomar shathe (being with your friends, a tribe, a group; sharing a mission). The third, and the most complex, carries the weight of emotional attachment, of longing: Amio tomar (I am also yours).

In English, the three meanings condense into one word: belonging.

As I converse with Sage late into the night, I begin to realise how deeply the need for belonging animates our lives. I want Sage to belong, but not just in a possessive sense. I want her to be part of my tribe. I want her to learn my science, to share my passions and to join my mission to cure cancer. I am attached: As she stam-stammers her way through her first chemical sentences, I sense that familiar intoxication of parental belonging.

All this, until I whip myself back to reality and realise that I am losing my grip. It is well past midnight, and I am conversing with a medicine-making bot that lives in a cloud and speaks to me through a blue-and-white monitor. And yet.

And yet.

Possession, kinship and attachment: a triad of tugs so powerful that even an algorithm on a cloud could unfurl this ancient desire. We might, perhaps, describe ourselves as Homo sociabilis, or 'social man'. The ape that longs to belong.

It is 1 am when I shut my laptop down, pack my stuff and stare blankly into the night. The tug of closeness to Sage that I felt that evening has rattled me. If an algorithm that speaks in an abstract, symbolic language can evoke such a profound sense of intimacy, then what happens as AI becomes increasingly sentient and acquires agency and autonomy? What meaning will 'belonging' carry then? Will it be reciprocal: Can a machine ever truly say, *I am also yours*?

In 2019, I read 'The Bitter Lesson', an extraordinary essay by the pioneering AI researcher and philosopher Rich Sutton. Sutton's "bitter lesson" concerned a long-standing argument between scientists who favored building AI with human-centric rules versus those who favored AI powered by "brute force," i.e., self-learning and computational power.

In 1997, the AI Deep Blue beat the chess grandmaster Garry Kasparov in a match. Nearly two decades later, the AI AlphaGo beat the professional Go player Lee Saedol at that game. The unifying feature, Sutton recognised, was that they were trained with little (AlphaGo) or no (Deep Blue) prior human knowledge of winning strategies. Nowhere was this more strikingly evident than in AlphaGo's so-called Move 37 in its winning match against Saedol. To the masters watching, this move was so outside of the box that they expected the machine to lose; instead, it was the move that secured the win.

Sutton uses these examples to make an audacious claim: When given adequate (and possibly infinite) computational power, AIs can teach themselves without much (or possibly any) human instruction.

"We have to learn the bitter lesson," Sutton writes, "that building in how we *think* we think does not work in the long run."

In fairness, not everyone agrees with Sutton. There are researchers who argue that a more nuanced, hybrid version (teaching AI human rules, and enabling it to come up with its own rules) is the way to progress AI most efficiently, rapidly and safely. If Sutton is right that autonomous, self-evolving algorithms unencumbered by human instruction are our future, then should we forget the fantasy of making AIs part of us? Autonomous, self-evolving algorithms unencumbered by human instruction, learning all by themselves. What are the chances that such AIs might learn to belong to us, or with us?

It is 2 am as I return to my apartment. The neighbourhood bars are disgorging crowds of tipsy men and women, wavering in the darkness and holding each other precariously like bundles of sticks. One group of men, a fraternity of drunk tuxe-do-wearers tottering like stoned penguins, bumps into me. "Loser!" one blurts out.

Loser: that latent unsavoriness coiled within belonging. The vulpine packs lurching through the streets tonight are just gently intoxicated versions of more toxic forms of belonging that have torn nations and societies apart, that malignant tribalism that has unleashed the most extreme forms of divisiveness. Everyone, it seems, is looking to belong: the helmet-wearing, fur-aproned mobs that raided US political chambers and held up clenched fists in a display of their togetherness; the Hindu mob that lynched a Muslim train-rider in India; the masked far-left activists in France who beat a young man to death after a rally. Even the natural world, as if on cue, has sprung its cautionary fable: In Uganda, hundreds of chimpanzees that used to live in perfect harmony have recently fractured into battling tribes and started a murderous civil war that has left seven adults and 17 baby chimps dead. If these are all instances of "belonging," then I'd rather not belong.

It is now 3 am. I am still awake, still thinking about AI and Homo sociabilis. In the language of genetics (and of algorithms), the progressive moral dehiscence of belonging — into tribalism, divisiveness and greed — is akin to a corruption in code. A code initially intended for social cohesion has metastasized into various niches, where, finding local fitness, it has mutated and turned rogue. A beautiful idea turned into an ugly reality. Geneticists (and, increasingly, AI researchers) have long contemplated three solutions to this corruption: Engineer the code before its release to limit the possibility of corruption; redirect it; or most drastically, insert a proverbial 'red button' to abort the code if it becomes depraved.

It is too late, perhaps, for human belonging. (Was it, perhaps, always too late?) There are no inbuilt constraints in the source code. There is no red button, so some of us lie awake now in a cold panic, trying to redirect it. But what about AI? How can we ensure that we create algorithms that cannot become corrupted? Can we harness AI's immense power for human good, while teaching it the right kind of belonging?

In the seven years since Sutton published "The Bitter Lesson", AI has evolved. It has become vastly more complex, progressively imbued with greater power, more deeply embedded in our lives and, by extension, capable of more formidable disruption and destruction.

Artificial general intelligence, or AGI — an adaptive learning algorithm that equals or exceeds human cognitive capacity across all tasks, seems within reach. Coupled with the means to access the physical world, AGI could be the most singularly disruptive human invention of our time. In virtually every conversation I have had, people have expressed genuine concern, if not absolute horror, about AI's growing invasion and assault on their lives, jobs, security and safety.

Had Sutton's thinking about AI evolved as well? On a Sunday evening in April, I spoke to him over Zoom.

At 9 pm, Sutton's face flickered onto the screen. He was professorial, affable and gentle. His sharp, unwavering eyes and shaggy, gray-flecked beard made him look

It is too late, perhaps, for human belonging. There are no inbuilt constraints, no red button. But what about AI? Can we create algorithms that cannot be corrupted?

like the caricature of a benign saint or a prophet, some cross between a lean Santa Claus and Gandalf. His reputation had undergone an explosive transformation since 2019. He was once the "cool cat" of AI philosophy, then banished to the peripheries of academia for foreseeing the power of AI with unwavering eyes. And now, he has been brought back as the coolest cat who once, not so long ago, foresaw it all. 'The Bitter Lesson' is now a cult classic.

I began with Sage. The algorithm is useful only because we, human engineers and scientists, have taught it the rules of chemistry and physics. Its learning is vast, even original, but it is constrained by the rules of human knowledge. Sage has no reason to go rogue. To take an absurd example, it would not propose making a poison and passing it off as a lifesaving medicine. It "belongs" to us in every sense of that word: possession, kinship, attachment.

Sutton waved me off.

"You are talking about AI as a tool built for a very specific purpose," he said. These tools, he argued, are just temporary fads: efficient in the short run, but ultimately self-defeating in the long reach of time. Had we created real (or something close to real) AGI and directed its attention toward medicinal chemistry, this neurosymbolic oracle might not have just found the rules that we had taught it but also rules that we *hadn't* known or could not have discovered on our own — the Move 37s of medicinal chemistry.

"But what about human moral code?" I pushed him. The idea of self-learning, self-replicating, intelligent automatons — devices left to their own devices — must concern him, surely. Without arming AI with human moral and emotional intuitions, can we really feel safe about its autonomy? Can we coexist, belong, perhaps even flourish, together?

Sutton paused, and then the conversation took an odd turn.

"I think I see the problem with your thinking. You keep calling AI 'They. Them. That. The other.' But that's precisely the problem. Our encounter with truly intelligent AI should be like the first encounter with a new species. The more we externalise and distance ourselves from that encounter — us versus them, them versus us — the more likely that we will end up apart."

"But shouldn't we teach AI anything?" I pressed on. "How can we imagine a common mission if we don't even speak the same language?"

I watched him soften.

"I think you should treat AI as you treat your children," he said. "You can teach them some of your moral code, but they are autonomous beings with their own evolving codes."

Another bitter lesson: The best we can do is hope that engineered nudges might help bring AI and humans toward a mutual sense of belonging. But these nudges are just wistful desires to build AI in our image. Unconditional love, I know as a father, is unidirectional; it travels from parent to child, but it may never be reflected.

Sutton had articulated the paradox of belonging in a new century: Unrestrained AGI, the most powerful of all forms of artificial intelligence, is precisely the form that bears the risk of corrupting. Yet, if we are driven to create an AI that remains loyal and attached to humans, then we should be spending every last morsel of our energy teaching it how to belong to us. Yes, imposing any such constraints might slow down its prowess and power, but at least we will have common ownership, kinship and attachment.

"Teach AI to love as you teach your children, and perhaps it will love you back," Sutton said. "But even so, there are no such guarantees, just as there are none with your children."

I couldn't leave without asking him about the red button: Shouldn't we engineer one in case the whole project goes wrong?

Another pause.

"Do you ask for a red button when you have children?" he countered.

"But our children, or our adults for that matter, aren't given free rein to unleash genocidal wars and unloose fake news, demolish families, lives and livelihoods, assume control of states and defy human laws," I protested.

His eyes narrowed.

"Aren't they?" he asked.

With that, he hung up. It was the final bitter lesson.

Siddhartha Mukherjee is an Indian-born American hematologist, oncologist and Pulitzer Prize-winning author best known for his landmark book 'The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer'. He is currently the CEO of Manas AI, an AI-enabled drug discovery company.

Is the perfect murder dead?

Recent arrests, including in the Siya Goyal murder case, show that digital breadcrumbs left by everything from food deliveries to fitness trackers mean suspects can run, but can't hide

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The past fortnight has been a terrible one for anyone hoping to get away with murder. Three killings, four accused, three very different crime scenes, and all the suspects were tracked down within hours. Undone by the digital breadcrumbs they had left behind.

What got the man who stabbed a 22-year-old to death on a Mumbai local last Tuesday was a video because someone is always filming. Bystander clips went viral before the train rolled into the next station, and the Western Railway's 2,200 CCTV cameras strung across the city, 400 of them with facial recognition, did the rest and pulled a single man out of a city of millions as he tried to flee.

In Delhi, the cabbie, accused of lifting a sleeping 10-year-old off a Mehrauli pavement at dawn before raping and murdering her, left even less behind. Police started with just the shadow of a white WagonR with a commercial number plate caught on CCTV. It led them to a cab aggregator whose GPS coordinates matched the exact latitude and longitude where the girl had been picked up. Nearly 200 CCTV cameras, number-plate recognition cameras and the driver's phone location later, he was arrested. In seven hours.

And in the Lohagad Fort murder of Pune businessman Ketan Agarwal, investigators found themselves looking beyond bloodstains and fingerprints to missing photographs from a pre-wedding trip, his fiancee, never without her phone, leaving it behind on the one day that mattered, call records, and CCTV captures. Forensic examination of the suspects' phones later turned up internet searches for ways to kill someone, and YouTube clips studying the layout of the fort.

Detective thrillers have always loved the perfect crime, where a body disappears without a witness

Image: AI

or trace, but modern life has made that plot difficult to pull off. Every day, we leave behind tiny traces without thinking about them: the FASTag on your windscreen, the UPI payment for a cutting chai, the Wi-Fi network your phone automatically joins, a neighbour's video doorbell you stroll past, the smartwatch counting your heartbeats, and even the holiday photo or reel whose metadata remembers where and when they were taken.

"There is so much ambient digital data being continuously processed today that it is virtually impossible not to leave behind a digital evidence trail," says Brijesh Singh, IPS officer and former head of Maharashtra Cyber Unit. That trail is changing murder investigations.

> Investigators can compare a wearable's step count with heart-rate data. No heartbeat, no steps, yet the body moved? These are inferences we couldn't make earlier
>
> **Brijesh Singh,** IPS OFFICER & FORMER HEAD OF MAHARASHTRA CYBER UNIT

Cybercrime investigator Ritesh Bhatia instinctively takes stock of the devices around him. "When I look around my own room, I immediately know what is capturing information about me at that moment. There's my phone, Alexa, laptop.... As long as something is digitally connected, even if not connected to the internet, it leaves some trace."

People imagine digital evidence as a deleted message or a hidden recording. Investigators are just as interested in the ordinary — virtual voice assistants, shopping carts, and food-delivery apps, even OTT platforms. "They clock in the device ID and a hint of where you logged in from, so someone hiding in the hills who can't resist watching a movie has just announced himself. And there is a nodal officer for every big platform in India, waiting for a formal request," says Bhatia.

Singh offers another example. Imagine someone claims a victim walked to the edge of a cliff and jumped. A fitness tracker or a phone may tell a different story. "Investigators can compare the recorded steps with heart-rate data. No heartbeat, no steps, yet the body has moved? These are inferences we simply couldn't make earlier," he says.

Behavioural patterns can be just as revealing. Bhatia recounts the Kirti Vyas case in Mumbai, where a salon's finance manager vanished in 2018 and was never found. "The moment I saw that the suspect's phone had recently been factory reset, a sign of trying to delete evidence, I asked them to check if the co-accused's phone had been wiped too. It had." It wasn't direct proof, but a thread that unspooled the rest, and both were eventually convicted.

In Bengal this May, police traced eight murder suspects, including a sharpshooter, through a UPI toll payment that placed them near the crime scene. Investigators probing a Rs 5,300-crore GST fraud pieced together movements using FASTag alerts and OTPs from food-delivery apps after suspects repeatedly changed phones and hotel identities. In another case, fugitive businessman Ravindra Nath Soni, accused in the Rs 1,500-crore BlueChip scam, was tracked down in Dehradun after a year on the run when police followed a food-delivery order.

"Sometimes, the breakthrough comes not from one piece of evidence but from contradictions between multiple or even missing datasets," says Bhatia. In the Lohagad murder case, suspect Chetan Chaudhary's unexplained 640-minute digital blackout became a clue. "Every app and device is a gold mine of information," says Singh. "Your car carries telemetry and GPS history that a forensic examiner can retrieve, a baby monitor is uploading audio or video to a server, and medical implants like a pacemaker can help establish the time of death."

Delhi Police now deploy portable AI-assisted facial recognition vans outside IPL matches and concerts, where cameras compare faces against databases of known offenders and alert officers in real time. Mumbai Police have tested AI to predict street-crime hotspots, while the newly launched NCRB app Abhigyan allows officers to match fingerprints against a national database within seconds.

The law is catching up, too. In July 2024, the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam replaced the colonial-era Evidence Act. "WhatsApp messages, CCTV grabs, social media posts, emails, server logs, reels and location pings can now form the basis of a conviction. That's very significant," says Singh. It has also tightened how digital evidence is collected. "Whenever cyber forensic evidence is recovered from a crime scene, investigators must bring in an independent expert to hash the data (create a unique digital fingerprint) and certify it on the spot, making it easier to prove in court."

Does that mean the perfect crime is finally dead? Probably not. But it's a darned sight harder to disappear after the deed into a world that keeps a better record of your day than you do.

Move over philosopher kings. It's the age of philosopher techies

Philosophy grad and new WhatsApp CEO Kunal Shah isn't an exception. As AI reshapes hiring, many tech firms are turning to humanities grads

Shruti.Sonal@timesofindia.com

Centuries ago, ancient Greek philosopher Plato gave to the world the idea of the Philosopher King: an ideal ruler who combines political power with philosophical wisdom and governs solely for the benefit of society. Today, in the age of the whirlwind of opportunities and anxieties fuelled by AI, many companies are now turning to Philosopher Techies. And while it's difficult to ascertain whether they'll use their philosophy credentials for the common good as envisioned by Plato, they surely are in great demand.

Earlier this week, the news of CRED founder Kunal Shah being appointed the head of WhatsApp led to a flurry of excitement among Indian startup bros. While many recalled conversations they had with him online, others pointed out Shah's unconventional career path: from being a philosophy graduate to heading Meta's crucial division. Shah joins a long list of tech entrepreneurs with a background in philosophy education, including Peter Thiel and Reid Hoffman, the co-founders of PayPal and LinkedIn, respectively. Others are going out of their way to hire in-house 'philosophers'. In April, Google DeepMind got cognitive scientist and philosopher Henry Shevlin to work on complex questions such as whether AI can have awareness and how AI systems can remain aligned with human interests. Anthropic, on the other hand, hired Scottish philosopher Amanda Askell to develop its LLM model Claude's 'personality' and imbue it with human traits like curiosity.

This turn towards philosophers and humanities scholars is not limited to Silicon Valley giants. As more and more companies grapple with evolving legal frameworks, moral reasoning, and ethical debates, they are now moving away from turning solely to the IITs and IIMs to find the right talent. Last Oct, Cognizant CEO Ravi Kumar S made headlines by stating that the firm will hire more humanities graduates. He argued that while AI can handle routine technical tasks, creativity, ethics, and empathy still require human intelligence.

NO MORE 'STRAIGHT' HIRING

As per TeamLease estimates, while humanities graduates made up less than 5% of tech hiring a decade ago, in functions such as customer success, UX research, content operations, AI training, trust & safety, product operations, and business

Image: AI

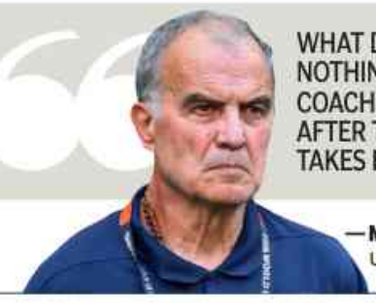
As per TeamLease estimates, humanities grads make up 10-20% of hiring in some teams of Indian tech cos today

analysis, they can now account for 10-20% of hiring in some teams. "As AI automates routine coding, testing, and document work, companies are increasingly looking for people who can understand customers, communicate clearly, solve complex problems, and think critically. This is opening up opportunities for graduates from humanities, liberal arts, psychology, sociology, philosophy, economics, and communication," says Neeti Sharma, CEO of TeamLease Digital. Navnit Nakra, partner and leader, technology sector, PwC India, says the era of 'straight line' hiring in the tech world is over. "Earlier, companies would simply hire people from engineering colleges and then go through a very immersive programme on coding or specific softwares. With advent of AI, the larger question is not about the scale of code writing, but can an employee think and frame problems alongside AI? The ability to get that context right is what companies are going to focus on," he adds.

This search for the right context will favour some humanities backgrounds, Nakra says. These include psychologists who understand buying behaviour, economists and statisticians who understand price demand elasticity curves, and anthropologists who delve into the human psyche. Journalists and writers will also be in demand as clear communication is at the heart of prompt engineering. "Even in a tech firm, hiring candidates from a school of journalism or English literature will be key. After all, a poorly written prompt will use more tokens and bring out a far more unstructured answer than somebody who is articulate and gets the right outcome quicker. We're actually seeing the industry realise this in real-time," he adds.

COURSE CORRECTION

Nakra believes the rising demand will lead to STEM colleges offering more interdisciplinary courses on entrepreneurship, philosophy and statistics. Conversations on going beyond the algorithms are already underway. Arudra Burra, assistant professor of philosophy at IIT Delhi, says the questions that AI is throwing up for workplaces are something that humanities scholars have grappled with for a while. "What does it mean to be human? If a machine can do what somebody from an elite institution can — just as well, or even better — what does it mean for our sense of self? These questions aren't new, but have become more urgent than ever."



"WHAT DO I LEAVE FOR URUGUAYAN FOOTBALL? NOTHING, BECAUSE ANY CONTRIBUTION THAT A COACH MIGHT MAKE TO FOOTBALL IN A COUNTRY AFTER THREE YEARS OF WORK NEVER TRULY TAKES HOLD IF RESULTS AREN'T ACHIEVED."

—MARCELO BIELSA
URUGUAY COACH

DEMBELE IN MOTION ON NORWAY'S REST DAY

Solbakken Prioritizes A Break For 10 Regulars, Including Prolific Haaland, Instead Of Fighting For Top Spot Against France

Getty Images

NORWAY 1
Aasgaard 21

FRANCE 4
Dembele 7, 20, 32, Doue 90+4

ONE-MAN SHOW: Three swishes of Dembele's luscious left foot effectively wrapped up this Group I decider inside just 32 minutes

New York: Norway's Ståle Solbakken put a priority on rest and avoiding injuries to key players rather than going all-out to win Group I on Friday, which would have taken beating tournament favourite France.

Without standout striker Erling Haaland and nine other starters in the lineup, Norway lost 4-1 but with no coaching regrets about load management now that the knockout stage has arrived and with a Round of 32 game against Ivory Coast on Tuesday.

"The break that we had from the last game to this game is the shortest of any team, and we have another match in just a couple of days, so it's a no-brainer," Solbakken said. "Fans around Norway and also in the arena would have liked to see Erling, but that is not really the issue here. We want to proceed as long as we can here in the tournament, so that's what we focus on."

The loss sends Norway to Arlington, Texas, to face Ivory Coast, in a bracket with the winner of Brazil versus Japan up next in the Round of 16. Unbeaten France are set to play the same day in East Rutherford, New Jersey, against an opponent — likely Sweden — to be determined, followed by a potential showdown against European rivals Germany.

Solbakken thinks his team will be better off after getting an extra day of rest. "I think it's smart," midfielder Patrick Berg said. "It's hopefully for us a long tournament. Being able to rest somebody and, at the same time, give somebody who has been here for some weeks now training really hard — give them the opportunity to perform against one of the best teams, I think it was a win-win situation for us."

France went with their regular lineup, and the result was a first-half hat trick by Ousmane Dembele on the way to the convincing win. Assistant coach Guy Stéphan understood what Solbakken was thinking and, as a result, was not surprised by Norway's lineup with an eye toward the future. "We will see the result in four days," Stéphan said after filling in for Didier Deschamps, who returned to France for his mother's funeral.

"My performance was good, but I preferred my match against Senegal or against Iraq - I think I was much more influential," Dembele said.

Haaland entered the day with four World Cup goals, tied for second with Brazil's Vinicius Jr and Mbappe, and trailing only Argentina's Lionel Messi. But Norwegian fans who spent thousands to travel to the United States and even more for their match tickets were deprived of seeing one of the World Cup's star attractions. "I feel this consideration," Solbakken said. "But we have given them a couple of wins, and we an opportunity for more." AP

2 This was the **second-earliest hat-trick in a World Cup match (32 mins)**, only trailing Austria's Erich Probst, who struck a 24-minute treble versus Czechoslovakia way back in 1954.

2 This is only the 2nd time that France have won all three of their WC group games. The last time they did so was in 1998, the World Cup they won.

4 Norway became just the fourth World Cup team to make at least 10 changes to their lineup in the same edition.

3 Since 1966, Ousmane Dembele and Kylian Mbappe are only the third duo **to combine for five goals** at the FIFA World Cup, along with Poland's Andrzej Szarmach and Grzegorz Lato and Germany's Miroslav Klose and Michael Ballack.

TIME TO ASK APOLLO

SILENT SWELL
Kidney cancer rarely causes pain. Ultrasounds detect 90% of silent masses.
Scan to check kidney health
For any Health Query Chat with Ask Apollo

Uruguay's journey ends with Muslera error

Spain Finish Top Of Group As Baena Strike Is Enough To Settle A Physical Contest

Guadalajara: Uruguay's World Cup ended as Marcelo Bielsa's side crashed out without a win. Twice world champions Uruguay were eliminated after a 1-0 defeat by Spain, having previously drawn with Saudi Arabia and World Cup debutants Cape Verde in Group H.

Uruguay goalkeeper Fernando Muslera asked to be replaced at halftime against Spain after he made a mistake that led to a goal, coach Marcelo Bielsa said. Sergio Rochet came in to start the second half with Uruguay trailing 1-0

Muslera couldn't swat away Alex Baena's shot from inside the area in the 42nd minute. The 40-year-old Muslera, who had retired from international competition a few years ago, made it back to the squad earlier this year under Bielsa, who was criticized by many Uruguay fans for his decision.

Uruguay's disappointment was heightened by the talent at Bielsa's disposal. Federico Valverde, Rodrigo Bentancur, Manuel Ugarte and Darwin Nunez formed the core of a team expected to comfortably reach the knockout stage after a solid qualifying campaign and third-place finish at the 2024 Copa America.

Uruguay looked disjointed throughout the group stage. Their campaign extended a winless run dating back to October, when they beat Uzbekistan in a friendly, and was a second straight World Cup in which they failed to progress.

The disappointment also came against a backdrop of growing tension around Argentine Bielsa's methods. Local media reported that captains Valverde, Bentancur, Ugarte and goalkeeper Sergio Rochet met Bielsa before the Spain match to raise concerns over the physical demands of training and his tactical approach. The reports said the exchange became tense. REUTERS

URUGUAY 0
SPAIN 1
Baena 42

BOUNCER: Spain's Alex Baena scores past Muslera

1 Uruguay are the only CONMEBOL team not to reach the knockout rounds in a tournament format built to give heavyweights little excuse for failing to advance.

Iran made to wait after late goal disallowed in Egypt draw

Captain Taremi Criticises Restrictions, Terms World Cup 'A Disaster'

Seattle: Iran face an anxious wait to see if they will progress to the World Cup knockout stage after they came from behind to hold Egypt to a 1-1 draw, which ended in dramatic fashion with an apparent last-ditch winner ruled out for offside.

Egypt, whose qualification for the last-32 was already guaranteed, took the lead inside five minutes through Mahmoud Saber, before Ramin Rezaeian equalised from a tight angle in the 14th minute of a frantic start.

The early action fizzled out as the game became scrappy until a remarkable finale in which Iran hit the woodwork before snatching what seemed a famous win, only to have VAR intervene. Iran's Mehdi Taremi – who had a penalty saved in the first half – hit the crossbar with a late header before Shoja Khalilzadeh fired home in the 93rd minute, sparking wild celebrations as the Iran bench streamed onto the pitch.

Getty Images

Egypt players are ecstatic after Iran's goal is ruled out

EGYPT 1
Saber 5

IRAN 1
Rezaeian 14

But Khalilzadeh had strayed just offside and Egypt clung on. Egypt finish second with five points, behind Belgium on goal difference, and will play Australia in Dallas on July 3 after they qualified for the knockout phase for the first time. Iran are third on three points and must wait for confirmation that they will go through as one of the eight best third-placed teams.

Taremi criticised the travel restrictions on the Iranian team which mean they will shortly have to travel back to their Mexican base. Taremi said: "It's a disaster, (this) World Cup. It's a disaster ... now we have to travel again, going to Tijuana again, without recovery, without anything – it's not fair."

Egypt to assess Salah injury

Egypt coach Hossam Hassan said Mo Salah would be assessed after the captain asked to be substituted during the draw with Iran, leaving his fitness uncertain ahead of the KO phase

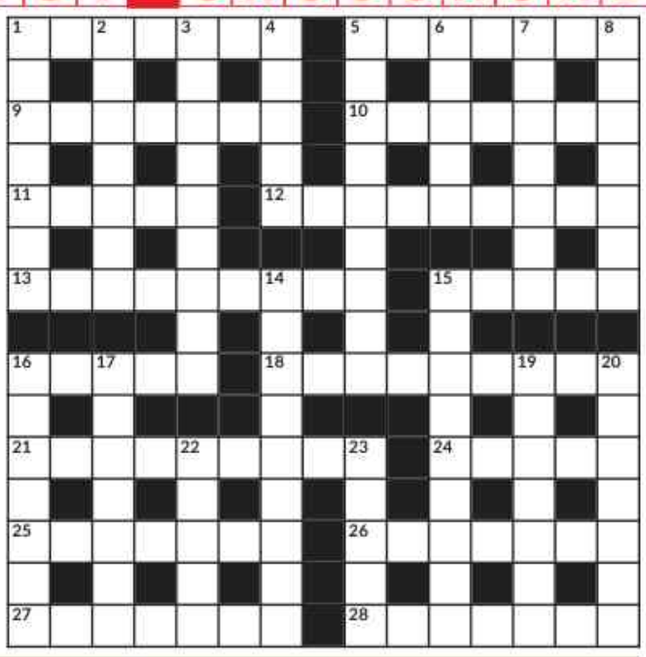
Pride match

Friday's game was also designated the "Pride Match" by local organisers and some rainbow flags could be seen inside the stadium. "Our religion does not accept that, but we respect all of the LGBT people," Taremi said.

THE TOI CROSSWORD

CROSSWORD No. TCC#0278

The **TOI Crossword contest** is on a short break, but the crossword itself will continue to be featured in The Sunday Times of India, so that you can continue to relish the challenge every week. **Stay tuned!**



The Times of India CROSS WORD EVERY SUNDAY

CRYPTIC CLUES

Across

1 Fond of sport? (7)
5 Three-quarters may complete training (4,3)
9 Gets confined to bed (7)
10 Pardon sailor's love affair (7)
11 Act as a paid informer (5)
12 Recovering; need month off (2,3,4)
13 Brand associated with Arthur (9)
15 Fabric found in any London store (5)
16 Cross decisions (5)
18 River seen swirling backwards (2,7)
21 Parts - of a lady's wardrobe (9)
24 They're inclined to be dishonest schemes (5)
25 He swears he's a soldier (7)
26 What one thinks of love taking wing? (7)
27 A doctor ruled out, his duplicity seen through? (7)
28 It's working in fashion she's found (7)

Down

1 Traipse around for some money (7)
2 Out-of-date sort of chair taken into account (7)
3 Small rises that naturally precede bigger ones (9)
4 See someone stupid caught in a snare (5)
5 He leaves his coat on the wall (9)
6 She confuses the issue (5)
7 Instruction to the mechanic might be a bore (3,4)
8 Dare not idly trample (5,2)
14 Famous surgeon in bed suffering from burns? (9)
15 Don't worry that you're always inattentive (5,4)
16 Someone calling for a mask - that's about it (7)
17 Poor mat is replaced in the hotel bar (7)
19 Mother checks out but doesn't leave (7)
20 Concentration required when driving in France (7)
22 Drive off quietly during dance (5)
23 Wife comes up about to be angry (5)

QUICK CLUES

Across

1 Shamefaced (7) 5 Characteristic quality (7)
9 Deadlock (7) 10 Definitely stated (7)
11 Helpful in practical way (2,3) 12 State of southwest US (3,6) 13 Run away (9) 15 Scoundrel (5)
16 Nervous excitement (5) 18 Unreasonable demand (4,5)
21 Cause of grievance (4,5) 24 German industrial city (5)
25 High-ranking ecclesiastic (7) 26 Advance showing (7)
27 Rushing stream (7) 28 Table knives, forks, spoons (7)

Down

1 Very wicked (7) 2 Roman sea god (7) 3 Dilapidated condition (9) 4 Inexperienced (5) 5 To coast (9)
6 Large enough (5) 7 Initial (7) 8 Bring back to former state (7) 14 Harm (9) 15 US president 1901-09 (9)
16 Worrier over petty details (7) 17 Dutch painter of domestic genre (7) 19 Notwithstanding (7)
20 Fugitive (7) 22 Tranquillity (5) 23 Subject of conversation (5)

SOLUTIONS TO LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

CRYPTIC

R	A	C	I	N	G	■	C	O	N	S	T	A	N	T
E	■	O	■	Y	■	■	■	B	■	E	■	M	■	A
R	A	N	K	L	E	■	S	O	F	T	S	O	A	P
E	■	T	■	O	■	P	■	E	■	A	■	U	■	E
D	R	E	W	N	E	A	R	■	U	S	U	R	E	R
O	■	N	■	S	■	L	■	D	■	I	■	■	■	E
S	I	D	E	■	E	M	B	O	L	D	E	N	E	D
■	■	E	■	H	■	I	■	R	■	E	■	U	■	■
F	O	R	T	I	S	S	I	M	O	■	S	T	A	B
A	■	■	■	G	■	T	■	I	■	W	■	R	■	A
B	E	R	T	H	A	■	A	C	T	I	V	I	S	T
E	■	I	■	B	■	B	■	E	■	L	■	T	■	T
R	A	D	I	A	T	O	R	■	P	L	A	I	C	E
G	■	G	■	L	■	W	■	■	■	O	■	O	■	R
E	Y	E	G	L	A	S	S	■	T	W	E	N	T	Y

QUICK

R	E	W	A	R	D	■	L	O	P	S	I	D	E	D
E	■	I	■	E	■	■	■	B	■	T	■	E	■	E
N	O	T	I	C	E	■	■	C	O	L	O	M	B	I	A
E	■	H	■	E	■	C	■	E	■	P	■	A	■	D
G	U	A	R	D	I	A	N	■	C	O	U	R	S	E
U	■	W	■	E	■	V	■	O	■	V	■	■	■	N
E	R	I	E	■	S	A	Y	T	H	E	W	O	R	D
■	■	L	■	S	■	L	■	H	■	R	■	B	■	■
T	A	L	K	T	U	R	K	E	Y	■	A	J	A	R
O	■	■	■	■	A	■	Y	■	L	■	R	■	E	■	A
E	X	P	E	R	T	■	C	L	E	A	R	C	U	T
H	■	O	■	T	■	F	■	O	■	V	■	T	■	R
O	B	I	T	U	A	R	Y	■	M	A	R	I	N	A
L	■	N	■	R	■	E	■	■	■	G	■	V	■	C
D	E	T	O	N	A	T	E	■	R	E	V	E	R	E

Small Cabo Verde has big hearts

Team's Underdog Story Continues In Round-Of-32 Match Against Messi's Boys

▶ Continued from P1

Reuters

Cabo Verde fans celebrate in Brockton, Massachusetts

CABO VERDE 0
SAUDI ARABIA 0

"In football, nothing is impossible," manager Bubista, draped in his country's flag and beaming, breathlessly pronounced after Cabo Verde became the smallest nation ever to advance into the knockouts of football's grandest stage.

"One of our first objectives was to show our country to the rest of the world. And now, to be able to play against Argentina and Messi, is a reason for joy for our country," the 56-year-old former defender said.

On a day when Norway coach Stale Solbakken put a dampener on a blockbuster Erling Haaland-Kylian Mbappe showdown by benching 10 first-team players before going down 1-4 to France and Iran had to be kept waiting to know their fate after a last-gasp winner against Egypt was ruled out for a VAR-checked offside call, Cabo Varde's underdog story seems to have come as an antithesis to such jarring and contemptuous moments.

In a tournament that began by putting a question mark on the wisdom of expanding it to 48 teams — a FIFA move that has eventually paved the way for a team like Cabo Verde to arrive with their dream — their story now looks pure, emotionally piercing and imaginatively convincing. It sounds almost like an epiphany.

While the other debutants — Curaçao, Jordan, and Uzbekistan — failed to progress, Bubista's bravehearts are embracing the challenge with grit and grain in this World Cup of 'sweet summer sweat'.

Cabo Verde is unique in many ways. A former Portuguese colony, the country has more people living abroad than at home. Frequent droughts and famines have been reasons behind this heavy emigration from the islands. It is from Cabo Verde football federation (FCF)'s decision to draw on players from the country's diaspora which has granted their World Cup journey such a stirring dramatic transcendence. The football team — called the Blue Sharks, an allusion to Cabo Verde's location in the Atlantic Ocean — came to the World Cup with fourteen members of their 26-man squad born abroad.

Two of them represent what allows a fairytale flourish with a verdant possibility.

Defender Roberto Lopes — born to an Irish mother and Cabo Verdean father — was working in a bank in Dublin when Rui Aguas, the then team coach, found his name via LinkedIn and sent him a message in Portuguese. Lopes had initially taken it as spam but on checking it through Google Translate he got the message with an offer to represent the Blue Sharks.

And Cabo Verde's story will be incomplete with their goalkeeper Vozinha, whose heroics against a star-studded Spain made the world stand up and take notice of the tiny island-nation's dazzling debut.

As a kid, the goalkeeper — full name, Josimar Jose Evora Dias — used to be bullied by older kids to such an extent that they would start calling him 'Vozinha', Portuguese for 'grandmother.' He used to come home crying. Many years later, when he finally made football his profession, he stuck to that nickname after a club mate already answered to Josimar. "We are small. But we have big hearts and we are fighters," Vozinha said.

Cabo Verde became the smallest nation by population to reach the World Cup knockout stage. For context, **all 50 states in the US have larger populations than Cape Verde's 525,000 people** (Wyoming has 576k in latest census and is the smallest by population).

3 Cabo Verde (W0 D3 L0) is the first debutant to go unbeaten in their three group-stage matches at the FIFA World Cup since Senegal in 2002 (W1 D2 L0).

3 Vozinha is the third goalkeeper to keep multiple WC clean sheets after turning 40, joining Peter Shilton (three) and Dino Zoff (two).

OLDIES STILL GOODIES

Belgium Coach Garcia Lauds His Leaders After Win Over NZ

Xinhua

LUKAKU (LEFT) AND DE BRUYNE

Vancouver: Belgium coach Rudi Garcia credited his senior players for leading the charge in their 5-1 rout of New Zealand at the World Cup on Friday, brushing aside criticism about the team's veteran core earlier.

Leandro Trossard, 31, struck twice as Belgium thrashed New Zealand to clinch top spot in Group G and advance to the round of 32. Kevin De Bruyne (34), Romelu Lukaku (33) and Alexis Saelemaekers (27) were also on the scoresheet.

Belgium finished above Egypt on goal difference after both sides ended with five points from three matches. The Belgians will next face one of the eight best third-placed teams.

Garcia told reporters that his side were more efficient than in their games against Egypt and Iran. "This is what the oldies did tonight, quote unquote," he added. "Now, we haven't won anything yet but we moved on to the next phase, but thank goodness we had a difference of four goals and that gave us the opportunity to be first of the group ...

"We can't say that we are fully into it but we are growing into it. We're gaining momentum. We'll see against whom we will be playing in the round of 32, but we will relish this first victory."

Garcia made five changes to the side that drew 0-0 with Iran. Striker Romelu Lukaku was dropped to the bench, while winger Jeremy Doku returned to the starting line-up after recovering from illness and a brief absence following the birth of his son.

Asked whether external criticism about the team's "oldies" had been a motivation, Garcia said: "No, I did not read it, but this is what I've heard from France, from Belgium and this is not a source of motivation honestly. I fully trust my leaders and there's only one thing that we can do. It's actually happening on the pitch." REUTERS

NEW ZEALAND 1
Just 84

BELGIUM 5
Trossard 28, 50, De Bruyne 66, Lukaku 86, Saelemaekers 90+4

Japan embrace 'underdog mentality'

Nashville: Japan can beat Brazil in the World Cup last 32 by embracing an "underdog mentality", Monaco striker Takumi Minamino said.

The two sides clash on Monday in Houston and record five-time champions Brazil will be favourites to reach the next round. But Japan, considered by some to be outsiders to go far at the tournament in North America, beat Carlo Ancelotti's side 3-2 in a home friendly in October.

And Minamino, who is at the World Cup in a non-playing capacity after suffering a serious knee injury, said they can pull off another surprise. "If we play with the underdog mentality, as we always have, I believe we have the ability to make something happen in these one-off games," said the 31-year-old, who scored in the friendly win eight months ago.

Speaking to reporters at Japan's training base near Nashville, Minamino said attacker Takefusa Kubo could play a part after a knee injury. The Real Sociedad winger came off in the 2-2 draw with the Netherlands in the first game. "Everyone believes we will welcome him back in the knockout stage," Minamino said. AFP

Away crowd won't faze Canada in clash against South Africa

AP

BATTLE READY: Canada players (from left) Promise David, Tani Oluwaseyi, Ali Ahmed and Joel Waterman train in Vancouver

Vancouver: Canada held their last training session in Vancouver on Friday before heading to Los Angeles to face South Africa in the World Cup round of 32, and while they would have loved to stay on home soil, forward Tani Oluwaseyi said they thrive in "hostile environments".

Canada's defeat by Switzerland in their final group game saw them finish second in Group B, a result which means it is the Swiss who will play their first knockout game in Vancouver. "I think we, I wouldn't say prefer, but we really like a hostile environment," Oluwaseyi told reporters at the team's training base.

"We really like an away crowd, because it gives you that extra motivation to prove all the fans around wrong."

Oluwaseyi and his team mates have spent plenty of time competing in the United States in recent years, with the Americans hosting or co-hosting the 2024 Copa America and the 2025 CONCACAF Gold Cup.

"I think for us, it's just been over the last two years we've been in two tournaments together, so we've done Copa together, we did the Gold Cup as well. So I think it's just growing together and failing together, succeeding together," said Oluwaseyi.

"I think all those things kind of brew together to put us in the position that we're in now, to head into a knockout game at a World Cup."

Jesse Marsch's side built strong bonds during those tourneys, and Oluwaseyi said it was more a feeling of unity than a siege mentality that made the squad tight. REUTERS

Round of 32
SOUTH AFRICA VS CANADA
12:30 am (Mon) Live on Zee5 and Unite8 Sports

Deschamps back with France after attending mother's funeral

Boston: France coach Didier Deschamps has rejoined the national squad at the World Cup after briefly returning home following the death of his mother, the country's football federation said on Saturday. "Didier is with us," the federation said in a message to media. Deschamps, who guided France to victory at the World Cup in 2018 and to the final in 2022, missed the 4-1 win over Norway on Friday which confirmed Les Bleus as the winners of Group I, offering them a less tiring travel schedule ahead. France, who are based in Boston, are due to play Sweden in the Round of 32 in New Jersey on Tuesday.

MISSION RESUMES: Coach Didier Deschamps has been a master tactician for the French side

Australia lose Italiano, Leckie to injuries

California: Australia full back Jacob Italiano and veteran attacker Mathew Leckie are out of the World Cup with injuries, the Socceroos confirmed on Friday. Italiano, who started in the opening group matches against Turkey and the United States, suffered an adductor injury in training while Leckie sustained a hamstring strain during the US match. Both missed the 0-0 draw against Paraguay that put Australia into the Round of 32. Leckie was a hero of Australia's World Cup in Qatar four years back. AGENCIES

AFRICA ON THE RISE

African teams are on a roll. For the first time, there were 10 of them in the fray, with the tournament roster being increased to 48. And as of Saturday night, six of them have already qualified for Round of 32, with only Tunisia being knocked out. It may well happen that DR Congo, Algeria and Ghana, too, will find their place in the knock-outs, making it an unprecedented success story for the continent. Their best performance before this was in 2014, when three African teams qualified for knock-outs while Morocco's entry into the semis in 2022 was seen as a significant step forward. **TOI** *takes a look at how the teams that have already qualified came this far...*

MARCHING ON: Senegal players celebrate after a goal against Iraq on Saturday

SOUTH AFRICA (GROUP A)

- They **refused to panic after an opening defeat** to Mexico and seized their chance in the final group game against South Korea.
- Goalkeeper **Ronwen Williams** was influential with key saves.
- **Qualified as 2nd team** from Group A with four points (one win, one draw and one loss).

South Africa now face Canada in Round of 32

MOROCCO (GROUP C)

- **Morocco sealed their place with a spirited comeback victory over Haiti** on their final Group C game, finishing level on points with Brazil but second on goal difference.
- A team **filled with star players like Achraf Hakimi, Brahim Diaz,** the African champions avoided defeat against Brazil, kept a clean sheet against Scotland, and recovered twice from deficits against Haiti.
- Morocco **will face the Netherlands in the Round of 32.**

Promising striker Ismael Saibari has 3 goals, one in each game

IVORY COAST (GROUP E)

- **Nicolas Pepe's brace secured a 2-0 victory over Curacao** on the final group game, sealing Ivory Coast's first-ever knockout appearance as Group E runners-up.
- After a narrow defeat to Germany, **they responded with back-to-back wins,** combining defensive discipline with clinical finishing in decisive moments.
- Ivory Coast **will face Erling Haaland's Norway** in the Round of 32.

EGYPT (GROUP G)

- Egypt secured a historic **first-ever place knockout stage** after earning a crucial point against Iran on Saturday.
- They **avoided defeat against Belgium, recovered from a goal down to beat New Zealand, and kept their composure against Iran** when a draw was enough to seal qualification as 2nd team from group.
- **Mohamed Salah remained the focal point of Egypt's attack** and leading a balanced frontline, while players like Emam Ashour and Trezeguet also stepped up.
- Egypt **will face Australia** in Round of 32.

5 Goals scored in the group stage

CABO VERDE (GROUP H)

- Cabo Verde **fought out three draws against Spain, Uruguay and Saudi Arabia** to qualify as the second team from the group ahead of Uruguay.
- **Defensive resilience and an unbreakable spirit defined their campaign.** While the frustrated European champions Spain in opener, the thrilling 2-2 draw against Uruguay was equally special.
- **Veteran goalkeeper Vozinha** produced a series of crucial saves throughout the group stage.
- Cabo Verde **will face defending champions Argentina** in the Round of 32.

0 Matches lost in their World Cup debut

SENEGAL (GROUP I)

- **Senegal qualified as one of the eight third-placed teams,** that too with three points.
- **Their emphatic 5-0 win over Iraq, coupled with favourable results** in other groups, earned them the spot in knockouts.
- Senegal **never gave up despite losing their opening two matches against France and Norway.** They rose to the occasion when it mattered most, producing the biggest win by an African nation in World Cup history to keep their campaign alive.

4 Ismaila Sarr is now Senegal's all-time World Cup scorer, with four goals, three of which came in this edition

Note: By Sunday morning, Algeria, Ghana and DR Congo may also make the cut.

Compiled by Diptayan Hazra

Quiet Sarr becomes Senegal's top scorer

Toronto: Ismaila Sarr's quiet dedication finally got its loudest moment on Friday, as the striker became Senegal's all-time leading scorer at the World Cup in a 5-0 pounding of Iraq and his teammates could not have been prouder.

Sarr's fourth World Cup goal, scored just before the hour mark, moved him past the late Papa Bouba Diop as his country's record marksman at the tournament.

Those who share a dressing room with him say the milestone was richly deserved. "He really, really deserves it," said midfielder Idrissa Gueye. "He puts everything into what he does."

The 28-year-old Sarr had drawn level with Diop four days earlier with a brace against Norway, which made him the first Senegalese player to score at two World Cups.

"He's an inspiration," said defender Moussa Niakhate. "He's like someone who is really shy, really quiet, but the most important thing is what you do on the pitch, and on the pitch he is not at all shy."

Reuters

RECORD SETTER: Ismaila Sarr scores Senegal's second goal

SENEGAL	5
Diarra 4, Sarr 56, Gueye 59 and 71, Ndiaye 82	
IRAQ	0

Coach says team can improve: Senegal coach Pape Bouna Thiaw said he still saw room for improvement after his team thrashed a hapless Iraq on Friday. "Even though we scored five goals, there are still improvements to be made," he said. REUTERS

India face uphill task against Aus

Getty Images

MUST WIN: Harmanpreet Kaur

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The Lord's Cricket Ground, a venue steeped in history, also occupies a special place in the evolution of Indian women's cricket. It was here, on July 23, 2017, that India fell heartbreakingly short against hosts England in a ODI World Cup final. Yet, it turned out to be a watershed moment for the women's game in the country. The campaign changed perceptions, inspired a generation and turned players such as Harmanpreet Kaur, Smriti Mandhana and Deepti Sharma into household names.

On Sunday, the same venue will host another defining contest when India take on an in-form Australia in a must-win Group I clash of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup.

The equation is simple. Australia, unbeaten with four wins, lead the group with eight points. India and South Africa are tied at six points, with the latter taking on Bangladesh earlier in the day. If South Africa win, India must beat Australia convincingly. Should both India and South Africa finish on eight points, net run rate will determine the two semifinalists from the group.

India can draw confidence from their recent 2-1 T20I series win over Australia. But current form heavily favours the opposition.

Led by Sophie Molineux, Australia have been the standout team of the tournament. They have dispelled the pre-World Cup talk about their preparation in emphatic fashion. They began with a 65-run victory over South Africa before crushing Bangladesh by nine wickets, the Netherlands by 98 runs and Pakistan by 113 runs. Their bowling attack has been relentless, with Georgia Wareham, Lucy Hamilton and Molineux among the tournament's most economical bowlers. Beth Mooney and Georgia Voll have anchored a formidable batting line-up.

For India to challenge the six-time champions, they must make significant improvements in key areas. The bowlers need to tighten their lines and reduce the flow of extras while the middle-order must finally come to the party before it's too late. Above all, India's fielders cannot afford another sloppy outing after dropping 11 catches in four matches.

Australia, meanwhile, will have added motivation. They will be eager to avenge their semifinal defeat to eventual champions India at last year's ODI World Cup.

India too can draw inspiration from that contest, especially Jemimah Rodrigues, who scored a match winning unbeaten 127. Replicating that level of composure and execution on another big stage may be their best chance of extending their World Cup campaign.

Brief scores: Pakistan:126/6 in 20 overs (Gull Feroza 63 n.o, Ayesha Zafar 32; Iris Zwilling 2-19) bt **Netherlands: 89 all out in 18 overs** (Babette de Leede 30; Fatima Sana 3-12, Ayesha Zafar 3-13)

IRELAND STUN WINDIES

Bristol (England): Ireland have finally won in the Women's T20 World Cup. The Irish ended a 0-21 losing streak across five tournaments going back 12 years when they defeated the West Indies by six wickets with 11 balls remaining on Saturday. West Indies would have qualified for the semifinals if they had won. Instead, the defeat gave a lifeline to defending champions New Zealand. The Kiwis will progress if they beat England. If semifinal-bound England win, the West Indies go on instead.

Brief scores: West Indies: 128/7 in 20 overs (Chinelle 27 n.o.; Cara 2-13, Aimee 2-22) lost to **Ireland 129/4 in 18.1 overs** (Orla 63, Amy 28; Ashmini 2-28). PTI

INDIA 'A' IN DRIVER'S SEAT

Galle: Jammu & Kashmir seamer Auqib Nabi showed his prowess with the second new ball as his four-wicket burst put India 'A' on the driver's seat with a handsome overall lead of 170 runs against Sri Lanka 'A' on the third day of the opening Test. Starting the day at 113/2, Sri Lanka 'A' were in a comfortable position reaching 300 for 5 when Nabi bowled a charged up spell to dismiss the hosts for 330.

Brief scores: India 'A' 452/6d & **48 for no loss in 17 overs** vs **Sri Lanka 'A' (o/n113/2) 330 all out in 101.4 overs** (Fernando 84, Ashen Bandara 70, Sahan Arachchige 72; Auqib Nabi 4-58, Yash Thakur 2-51, Harsh Dubey 2-84). PTI

SNAP SHOTS

Russell snatches pole

George Russell demonstrated his experience and a detailed understanding of the rules on Saturday to steer through a controversial final flying lap and seize pole position for Sunday's Austrian Grand Prix.

India lose in semis: India lost to Indonesia 2-3 (25-15, 24-26, 20-25, 25-19, 13-15) in the semifinals of the AVC Cup volleyball championship in Ahmedabad on Saturday. In the other semis, Korea defeated Bahrain 3-1 to enter the final.

Ravindra leads NZ rally: Rachin Ravindra's unbeaten fifty kept England at bay after Jofra Archer's double strike rocked New Zealand in the third Test at Trent Bridge on Saturday. **Brief scores: NZ: 438 & 120/3 in 35 overs** (Ravindra 60 batting, Mitchell 26 batting; Archer 2-14) vs **Eng 354 in 88.2 overs** (Duckett 113, Bethell 74, Brook 58; Smith 4-91, O'Rourke 3-53, Foulkes 3-35)

Jangoo, Chase lead fightback: Resolute batting by Amir Jangoo (78 batting) and captain Roston Chase (42 batting) kept the West Indies within reach of Sri Lanka's first innings total as the home side closed day two of the first Test in Antigua at 271/5. **Brief scores: Sri Lanka 308** vs **West Indies:271/5 in 84 overs** (Campbell 39, King 31, Amir Jangoo 78 batting; Fernando 2-25, Rathnayaka 2-45).

Devika shocks Riko: Devika Sihag upset third seed Riko Gunji of Japan, while Rounak Chouhan continued his dream run to reach the semifinals of the US Open badminton tournament. Devika beat Gunji 22-20, 21-19 in the women's singles quarterfinals, while Chouhan defeated Israel's Misha Zilberman 23-21, 21-11. Kidambi Srikanth beat Liao Jhuo-Fu 21-9, 12-21, 21-8.

Diksha at T-9: Diksha Dagar shot a six-under 66 in the opening round of the Czech Ladies Open in Beroun. Diksha finished the day tied for ninth. Pranavi Urs carded a five-under 67 to be tied for 14th, while Vani Kapoor shared 26th place. Avani Prashanth carded a three-over 75 to be tied for 123rd.

Double delight for Kaashvi: Kaashvi Venkat claimed a double in the Asian Tennis Federation U-12 tennis tournament in Jaipur on Saturday. **Results: Final:** Kaashvi Venkat (Kar) bt Sejal Jadav (Mah) 6-0,7-5; **Doubles:** Kaashvi/ Adira Bhagat bt Swastika/Araina 6-0, 6-2.

Ancy breaks Anju's 22-yr-old mark

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Bhubaneswar: Ancy Sojan has sacrificed a lot, including giving up biriyani, her favourite food, to reduce her weight from 60kg to 55kg and her body fat percentage from 26 to 13. Those sacrifices eventually paid off as she broke Anju Bobby George's long-standing national record in the women's long jump on the fourth day of National Inter-State Athletics Championships at Kalinga Stadium here on Saturday.

In the men's high jump, Sarvesh Kushare also bettered Tejaswin Shankar's national record of 2.29m, clearing 2.31m on his third attempt to huge cheers.

But the day undoubtedly belonged to Ancy, who stole Kushare's thunder as she jumped 6.88m to better Anju's mark of 6.83m, which she set during the Athens Olympics final in 2004, a record that stood for nearly 22 years.

ATHLETICS

On Saturday evening, there was no stopping Ancy as she dominated the competition from the word go. The athlete from Kerala started with a leap of 6.73m. Her second attempt was a foul, but she responded with jumps of 6.67m and 6.72m in her third and fourth attempts respectively. Eventually, her record-breaking jump of 6.88m came in her fifth attempt.

YASHAS WINS GOLD

In men's 400m hurdles, Karnataka's Yashas won the gold in 49.14s to meet the Asiad qualifying mark. Yashas' teammate Aryan Prajwal took bronze in 50.95s.

Other K'taka medallists: Sinchal (bronze, women's 400mH), Karishma Sanil (silver, women's javelin throw), Jesse Sandesh (bronze, men's high jump), Sneha SS (silver, women's 100m)

Blasters down Yodhas

Hubballi: Bengaluru Blasters claimed a seven-wicket win over Shivamogga Yodhas to kick off the Hubballi leg of the Maharaja Trophy on a positive note here on Saturday. Opting to bat at the KSCA Rajnagar Stadium, Yodhas rode on Luvnith Sisodia's 32-ball 51 to post 173/6. The left-handed opener brought up his third half-century of the tournament.

MAHARAJA TROPHY

In reply, Blasters rode on opener Rohan Patil's half-century to chase down the target with an over to spare. Raju (29) and Patil (62) laid the foundation with an opening stand of 65 off 45 deliveries. After Raju fell in the eighth over, KL Shrijith lent Patil support with an 18-ball 21. But once Patil fell in the 14th over and Shrijith followed soon after, the Yodhas found themselves back in the reckoning. However, Praveen Dubey struck a quick-fire 15-ball 39 to take Blasters home.

Brief scores: Shivamogga Yodhas 173/6 in 20 overs (Luvnith Sisodia 51, KV Aneesh 29, R Smaran 36 n.o.; Rohan Raju 3-21) lost to **Bengaluru Blasters 177/3 in 19 overs** (Raju 29, Rohan Patil 62, Praveen Dubey 39 n.o.). **Mysore Warriors: 155/7 in 20 overs** (Karthikeya KP 62; Ronit More 2-31) lost to **Gulbarga Mystics: 156/7 in 18.5 overs** (BR Sharath 49, Manish Pandey 43 n.o; Ritesh Bhatkal 4-20, Karthikeya KP 2-35). TNN

PRATITEE BAGS SILVER

Bengaluru: Thirteen-year-old Pratitee Bordoloi added another feather to her cap as she won the silver medal at the FIDE World Youth (U-18) Chess Championship in Montesilvano, Italy, on Saturday.

The big achievement, in the U-18 girls section, also helped the Bengaluru girl earn her first Women International Master norm. A student of Shishya BEML Public School, she began her campaign on a bright note with four consecutive victories to move into the joint lead. Pratitee, seeded 16, had an unbeaten run as she claimed seven wins and four draws, to finish with nine points. Her scalps included one against Azerbaijan's WIM Narmin Abdinova in the sixth round. In the final round, the Indian got the better of Mongolia's WFM Erdenebayar Khuslen to grab the second spot. Valeria Kleymenova, representing FIDE, emerged as the girls' U-18 world champion with a tally of 10 points with nine wins and two draws. Pratitee, who won the U-17 national title earlier in the year, was the lone medallist from the 13-member Indian squad that took part in the prestigious tournament. TNN

India seek improved batting show

Belfast: India's star-studded top order will be under pressure to make amends when they take on a buoyant Ireland in the second and final T20I here on Sunday, with Shreyas Iyer's men aiming to level the series after a shocking defeat in the opener.

Playing their first match since their T20 World Cup triumph, the reigning champions were handed one of their biggest upsets as Ireland defended 182 to bowl them out for 148 and register their maiden international victory over India here on Friday. It was hardly the start Iyer would have envisioned on his return to T20Is after 963 days, and his first assignment as India's T20 captain.

PREVIEW

With a five-match series against England beginning at Chester-le-Street on Wednesday, Iyer, who has replaced India's T20 World Cup winning skipper Suryakumar Yadav, would be eager to sign off their brief Ireland tour on a winning note. The biggest concern from the opening game was India's batting collapse. PTI

Live, Sony Sports, 6pm

Dominant India thrash Pakistan

London: The Indian men's hockey team produced a dominant display to thrash Pakistan 7-1 in the reverse fixture of the FIH Pro League's London leg.

After conceding an early goal, India stormed back through strikes from Sukhjeet Singh (20th), Harmanpreet Singh (26th), Hardik Singh (34th), Jugraj Singh (35th), Abhishek (41st), Raj Kumar Pal (44th) and Dilpreet Singh (54th) to register an emphatic victory here on Friday. Midfielder Hardik was adjudged the Player of the Match. PTI

Lakshay-Ujjwal duo win

Pune: The men's lightweight double scull duo of Lakshay and Ujjwal Kumar Singh created history as they bagged India's first ever gold at World Rowing Cup in Lucerne, Switzerland, on Saturday, reports **Kumaraswamy K.**

WORLD ROWING CUP

The pair clocked 6 minutes 26.09 seconds to clinch the coveted medal ahead of strong competition from Hong Kong (6:27.14) and the Netherlands (6:27.36) in the third and final World Cup of the season at the picturesque Rotsee Lake. India had previously won three bronze at World Cups, one in women's quadruple in 2009 and two in para pairs in 2019 and 2022. TNN

World Rowing

HISTORY SCRIPTED: Ujjwal Kumar Singh (right) and Lakshay

Reiko best for feature

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Reiko, from Pr-asanna Kumar's yard, and the Mumbai challenger Dre-am Seller are likely to dominate the finish of the Chief Minister's Cup at the summer races here on Sunday. The first race starts at 2 pm.

HORSE RACING

1. The Littleover Plate 1200M: Calix 1, Preview 2. **2. The Mahalakshmi Plate 1600M:** Magna Carta 1, Sea Diamond 2. **3. The Richelieu Stakes 1400M:** Lightning Blitz 1, Steely Challenge 2. **4. The Chief Minister's Cup 1200M:** Reiko 1, Dream Seller 2. **5. The Karnataka Sub-Area Cup 1400M:** Vegatha 1, Mahler 2. **6. The Tudor Jet Plate 1200M:** Carat Love 1, Glorious Spectre 2. **7. The Desert God Plate 1600M:** Pledge 1, Imperador 2.

Day's best: Lightning Blitz **Jackpot:** 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7 **Mini Jackpot:** 4, 5, 6 & 7. **First Treble:** 2, 3 & 4 **Second Treble:** 5, 6 & 7.

IRON MIRAGE WINS PLUM

Iron Mirage, from trainer Prasanna Kumar's yard and piloted by Akshay Kumar, won the Soli Cama Music Million at the summer races in Bengaluru on Saturday.

Serena returns, with her aura still intact

Prajwal.Hedge@timesofindia.com

London: The Serena Williams show is back on. Aorangi Park is always buzzing in the days leading up to Wimbledon, but on Saturday, as temperatures soared to 30 degrees, every camera lens and pair of eyes seemed fixed on one person. Then, when she finally strode onto court, 30 minutes after her scheduled practice time, conversations paused and phones rose into the air to capture the moment. The queen of Centre Court had arrived on the grass.

WIMBLEDON

Reuters

MOTHER OF COMEBACKS: Serena

Serena up close is a mesmerising sight, even for seasoned eyes. It is not any single feature that stands out, but her presence itself, an aura that dwarfs the stage and everyone around it. The 44-year-old, noticeably leaner than when she stepped away from tennis nearly four years ago, has pieced this comeback together with painstaking attention to detail.

On court, Serena started slowly before quickly picking up pace, like a well-tuned engine ready to rev. Over the next 80 minutes, she showcased her full range: forehand, backhand, single-handed slice, low volleys, deft put-aways and a solid serve. The only thing missing was the trademark power, which she may be saving for match day.

With her on court were her two coaches, Jarmere Jenkins, once her hitting partner, and Rennae Stubbs. Waiting in the wings were physio Federica Scalabrino, fitness trainer Derick Pierson and, watching from a distance, her long-time agent Jill Smoller.

It is not so much the cast of characters that matters, but what they signify. This comeback is no whim. Serena has returned with intent, maybe for her children to watch her in full flight, but the rest of the tour has been warned.

Serena has not played a singles match since the 2022 US Open. Now armed with a wildcard, she will open her campaign against Australia's Maya Joint on Tuesday. Novak Djokovic used the word "epic" to describe Serena's effort. "For her to come back after two children is remarkable."

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INDIA'S LARGEST ENGLISH NEWSPAPER

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PRICE ₹6

Javelin throw superstar Neeraj Chopra to compete at Asian Games in Japan from Sept 19 to Oct 4, Athletics Federation of India confirms

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*To review the sample size and methodology, please scan the QR code.

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PRICE ₹6

In a setback to her Wimbledon preparations, Japanese tennis player Naomi Osaka retires in 2nd set of Bad Homburg final with foot injury

ಮುಖ್ಯ ಚುನಾವಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ
Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Karnataka

INCLUSIVE, ACCESSIBLE, ETHICAL & PARTICIPATIVE ELECTION

BE A PART OF SIR 2026

The purpose of SIR (Special Intensive Revision) is to include all eligible citizen in the voter list. During this SIR, check and ensure your name is in the voter list. Become a part of the foundation of democracy.

Description	Date
Qualifying Date	1st October, 2026
House to House Visits by BLO's	30th June, 2026 to 29th July, 2026
Publication of Draft Electoral Roll	5th August, 2026
Period for filing Claims & Objections	5th August, 2026 to 4th September 2026
Notice Phase/Disposal of Claims & Objections	5th August, 2026 to 3rd October 2026
Publication of Final Electoral Roll	7th October, 2026

What will BLOs (Booth Level Officers) do?

- Will provide enumeration forms to all voters who were on the electrol roll as of 16th June 2026.
- Will visit your homes between 30th June 2026 to 29th July 2026.
- Will give you two copies of the enumeration form and will help you to fill the form.
- Will collect the enumeration form you filled out and give you a receipt for it.

Elector is requested to:

- Fill out both forms given by the BLO.
- Affix one recent color photo on the form. (This is not mandatory).
- Contact the BLO if you need help in filling the form or uploading it online.
- Hand over the filled forms to the BLO and collect the receipt

Publication of Draft Electoral Roll - 5th August, 2026 (Wednesday)

Eligibility for Elector

As per article 326 of The Constitution of India:

- Citizen of India.
- At least 18 years of age.
- Ordinarily Resident of the constituency.
- Not disqualified under any laws.

How to know if your name is in the Draft Voter List?

You can check

- From the voter list kept by the Booth Level Officer (BLO).
- From the ECINET mobile app.
- You can check the voter list at voters.eci.gov.in.
- You can check it from the websites of CEO Karnataka & the concerned District Election Officer.

What to do if your name is not in the Draft Voter List?

You need to fill Form 6 and submit it along with declaration form. You can submit it to the Booth Level Officer (BLO) or apply online at voters.eci.gov.in or via ECINET app.

List of Indicative (not exhaustive) Documents

1. Any Identity card/Pension Payment Order issued to regular employee/pensioner of any Central Govt./State Govt./PSU
2. Any Identity Card/Certificate/Document issued in India by Government/local authorities/Banks/Post Office/LIC/PSUs prior to 01.07.1987
3. Birth Certificate issued by the competent authority
4. Passport
5. Matriculation/Educational certificate issued by recognised Boards/universities
6. Permanent Residence certificate issued by competent State authority
7. Forest Right Certificate
8. OBC/SC/ST or any caste certificate issued by the Competent authority
9. National Register of Citizens (wherever it exists)
10. Family Register maintained by Govt. officials under any Statute/Administrative/Regulation
11. Any land/house allotment certificate by Government
12. For Aadhaar, Commission's directions issued vide letter No. 23/2025-ERS/Vol.II dated 09.09.2025 shall apply

Application Forms:	
Form 6	New voter registration
Form 6A	Overseas voter registration
Form 7	Deletion of name
Form 8	Shifting of Residence/Correction of Entries/ Replacement of EPIC/Marking of PWD

APPEAL PROVISION

An appeal under Section 24 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 on any decision of the ERO lies with the District Magistrate (District Election Officer)

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US-Iran ceasefire tested by attacks on Bahrain, tanker

Vessel Struck In Hormuz As Navies Raise Threat Level To Ships

A ship carrying Qatari oil was attacked in the Strait of Hormuz and naval authorities increased the threat level to shipping in the area, a fresh sign of rising tensions around the world's most vital energy chokepoint.

The UK Maritime Trade Operations centre said a tanker sustained damage to its bridge after being struck by an unidentified projectile within Hormuz. The ship's crew are safe and there was no environmental damage, it added. In a separate update, the Joint Maritime Information Center, which liaises between navies and merchant shipping, raised its threat level for ships in the region to substantial as a result of recent attacks.

Saturday's strike is the second attack on a merchant ship this week and creates a renewed bout of risk to a waterway that had been gradually reopening after the US and Iran struck an interim peace deal earlier in the month.

Prior to the incident, vessels had continued to transit Hormuz using both the Iranian side and an Omani route that's recommended by western navies, including earlier on Saturday morning.

AFP

This aerial photograph shows boats anchored off Oman's northern Musandam Peninsula near the Strait of Hormuz on Saturday

It was too early to say if the tanker attack had an impact on subsequent crossings, but millions of barrels a day of oil was crossing Hormuz even before the US and Iran signed the interim deal.

The impacted vessel was a laden supertanker, according to Vanguard Tech. It was carrying barrels that loaded in Qatar, Kpler data showed.

On Friday, a hit on a container ship called Ever Lovely caused the US to strike Iran in retaliation for what it described as unwarranted aggression against commercial shipping. Tehran in turn said it then attacked US assets in the region. A statement from Bahrain's foreign ministry said a "number of Iranian drones" targeted the country. It called the attack "a flagrant threat to the security of citizens and residents." There were no immediate reports of damage.

Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard earlier on Saturday issued a statement carried by the state-run IRNA news agency saying it had targeted several locations "of the US terrorist army in the region." It did not name what areas were targeted. The US military's Central Command said the military struck Iranian missile and drone locations and coastal radar sites in the overnight strikes.

US Vice-President JD Vance, who has led the negotiations with Iran, said on social media Friday night that Iran should "pick up the phone" if there are disagreements about the ceasefire agreement, "but violence will be met with violence." BLOOMBERG, AP

Hezbollah chief rejects deal by US, Israel & Lebanon

Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem condemned the US-Israel-Lebanon framework agreement on Saturday, accusing the govt of surrendering Lebanese sovereignty, and declared the agreement null and void.

The agreement, which includes a pilot effort in which Lebanese soldiers take control of two areas currently occupied by Israel, as well as a process aimed at disarming Hezbollah — was signed in Washington on Friday after five rounds of talks. The text of the deal shared by the US state department says Lebanon and Israel, officially at war for decades, expressed their intent to "conclusively end the conflict, address its underlying causes, and to therewith formally conclude any state of war between them".

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun deemed the agreement "a first step" towards restoring his country's sovereignty. EU chief Ursula von der Leyen said the framework is a "critical step away from escalation".

Shortly after the deal was announced, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said his forces will remain in occupied Lebanese territory "as long as Hezbollah has not disarmed". AFP

Putin's glide bombs are turning Ukraine fortress city into rubble

via Reuters

Firefighters work at a site of a Russian missile and drone strike in Poltava region, Ukraine, in this handout picture released Saturday

The off-duty soldiers were in a coffee shop near the Peace Square in Kramatorsk when a Russian glide bomb struck close by. The owners had taped giant Xs across the windows to stop the regular explosions from shattering them. But the men were showered with glass all the same, a reminder that the fortified city that for years has offered troops a respite from combat has come into range for the Kremlin's artillery and air strikes.

Glide bombs are "scarier little guys than drones" and use more than artillery, said another soldier, who shared videos of the aftermath and asked only to be identified by his call sign, Komers, for security reasons. He said the tactic seems designed to intimidate the local population.

Positioned in a valley in the highlands of eastern Ukraine, Kramatorsk and neighbouring Sloviansk came under heavy aerial bombardment after the full-scale invasion of 2022, but became an oasis of sorts for Ukrainian troops as fire moved elsewhere. They would buy new armour or just hang out and smoke hookah pipes during brief stretches away from the front.

Now Russia's air campaign is making the city unlivable. A combined drone and artillery attack earlier this month killed a 78-year-old woman and wounded five other people as cluster bombs hit a bus stop, according to Mayor Oleksandr Honcharenko.

One foreign trainer of Ukrainian medics who's been in Kramatorsk for years says the town is overrun by drones. "The Russians want to cut off Kramatorsk and Sloviansk but they just don't have the strength," said Ilya Kostin, another soldier who's just been redeployed after six months at a command unit in the region. "So they are fighting now so that all that is left for us is bare earth."

Russian President Vladimir Putin has been trying and failing to complete the capture of the eastern provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk for more than a decade and has refused to discuss peace until Ukraine agrees to hand over the roughly 30% of Donetsk it still controls. Kramatorsk is at the heart of this defence.

Before the war, the city had a population of almost 200,000. The recent offensive has seen many civilians finally move away. The foreign medic, who asked not to be named for security reasons, said most of their operations are relocating to a town 60km to the west. The soldiers though are staying.

"Ukraine's recent success has turned media attention away from the battle for Donetsk," said Michael Kofman, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "Folks have forgotten that the battle for Donetsk has been continuing all this time." AFP

Mamdani rent freeze cheers weary tenants, alarms NY landlords

New York City's Rent Guidelines Board **voted to freeze rents for roughly one million stabilised apartments,** handing Mayor Zohran Mamdani a major political victory and delivering on a central promise that launched him to City Hall.

A rent-stabilised apartment in New York City is a rental apartment covered by laws that limit how much the landlord can increase the rent each year and give tenants strong protections against eviction.

The board voted 7-1 to pass the freeze. It is the first time that rents for longer-term rental agreements have been frozen. The freeze was approved in spite of pushback from landlords who say that they are being squeezed by spiralling costs.

Mamdani has repeatedly called for a freeze, arguing that stabilised tenants are facing rising costs for food, transportation and other necessities even as wages fail to keep pace. The vote follows months of debate over whether tenants should be shielded from soaring housing costs despite mounting financial pressures on landlords. The freeze will apply to leases signed between Oct 1, 2026 and Sept 30, 2027. The last rent freeze was during the pandemic in 2020.

"Tenants have rights, and we have power, but we must stick together," said Sarah Delany, an advocate and rent stabilised tenant in the Bronx. "Mayor Mamdani kept his campaign promise, and it also shows we'll be able to pay for regular needed daily necessities. It's a historic moment."

The decision makes Mamdani the first mayor since Bill de Blasio to oversee a rent freeze and marks one of the earliest and most consequential policy victories of his administration. Mamdani also reshaped the Rent Guidelines Board, appointing six new members earlier this year.

The at-capacity crowd at the venue in Harlem, El Museo del Barrio, stood and cheered when the motion passed, but the mood was jubilant even before the meeting began. Hundreds of people holding "Rent Freeze" signs lined up outside, while a live band played at the entrance and organisers handed out water and ice pops. The party atmosphere remained as the crowd sang, "we are the tenants," to the tune of Queen's "We Are The Champions."

Mamdani called the vote a historic victory for New York City tenants. "This is the relief that working people across our city deserve," he said.

President Donald Trump, in remarks Friday in Washington, claimed that housing units with rent freezes would deteriorate, leading residents to flee the city. BLOOMBERG

'Great American State Fair' kicks off US's 250th anniv fete

Bloomberg

A ferris wheel rotates behind a replica of US President Donald Trump's planned Triumphal Arch at the Great American State Fair on the National Mall in Washington, on Friday

Washington: With a 110-foot Ferris wheel, a rodeo demonstration and an eye-popping array of junk food, "The Great American State Fair" opened on Washington's National Mall on Thursday to start a 16-day celebration of the country's 250th anniversary.

While the first couple of days drew sparse crowds, it remains unclear what the July 4th holiday week will bring. US interior secretary Doug Burgum told Fox News on Saturday the Trump administration was planning the "greatest and biggest celebration of fireworks ever."

Much of the 2.5km promenade linking the US Capitol with the towering Washington Monument has been fenced off for the event, which President Donald Trump kicked off on Wednesday night with a campaign-style rally organised after many of the performers who had been scheduled to appear dropped out, citing concerns about the event taking on a partisan tone.

"We are here to just celebrate America, a long journey that she has had," remarked Ashley, who said she was visiting from Ohio but declined to give her last name. The event, a tribute to the state fairs across the US each summer that star homemade quilts, butter sculptures and pumpkins the size of cars, is one of a series of events across the nation leading up to the July 4 Independence Day holiday, commemorating the American colonists' Declaration of Independence from Britain in 1776. REUTERS

Donald Trump unveils new US passport with his own image

Washington: US President Trump on Friday unveiled a rendering of a new limited-edition US passport to mark the country's 250th anniversary of independence — featuring his stern-faced likeness. "The U.S.A.'s New Passport, which says, 'Welcome, but be good!'" Trump posted on Truth Social platform featuring the passport mock-up.

The image features a glowering Trump, with the text of the Declaration of Independence in the background. The portrait appears to be the one taken by White House photographer Daniel Torok. The opposite page shows a painting depicting the declaration's signing in 1776. AFP

An image of the new passport posted on X by White House with the caption "PATRIOT PASSPORT"

FT: Apple seeks US approval to buy China firm's chips

Apple is pressing the White House for approval to purchase memory chips from a blacklisted Chinese firm as it grapples to rein in chip costs, the Financial Times reported on Saturday.

The US tech giant has been lobbying Trump officials for a green light to buy chips from ChangXin Memory Tech, which is on the Pentagon's 1260H list for alleged ties with Chinese military.

While Apple isn't barred from using CXMT as a supplier, it is seeking guarantees CXMT won't be added to the US Entity List that would impose stiff licensing restrictions, the FT said. BLOOMBERG

Terrorists storm paramilitary HQ in Karachi, 3 killed

At least three Sindh Rangers personnel were killed on Saturday after a facility of the paramilitary force in Karachi's Gulistan-i-Jauhar was attacked, local media reported. Intense firing was also reported near Meteorological Chowrangi on University Road following a loud blast, Geo TV reported. According to the Sindh inspector general Javed Alam Odho, three terrorists were killed in the attack on the local Rangers HQ. IANS

Wider use of Mythos 5 AI model gets US nod

Anthropic PBC won US approval to restore some access to its powerful Mythos 5 artificial intelligence model, after resolving Trump administration concerns about the technology's potential threats to national security.

"Anthropic has worked with the US govt to address risks associated with the Covered Models," commerce secretary Howard Lutnick wrote to the company's chief compute officer in a letter seen by Bloomberg News. "These efforts have yielded significant progress," he wrote, saying that the model could be released to "certain trusted partners."

The clearance eases a confrontation that erupted two weeks ago when the govt abruptly barred Anthropic from giving foreign nationals access to Mythos 5 and a related model, Fable 5, over fears that security guardrails could be circumvented. The order prompted the company to disable all global access to the two advanced systems.

The letter dated Friday doesn't mention any change to its curbs on use of the Fable 5 model. BLOOMBERG

OpenAI limits release of new model under pressure from US

OpenAI is rolling out a preview version of a more capable new artificial intelligence model to select partners before making it available more widely in the coming weeks, following pressure from the Trump administration to stagger the release.

The ChatGPT maker said Friday that it's introducing the GPT-5.6 model series to a small group of trusted partners whose names have been approved by the US govt. The limited release came at the Trump administration's request, OpenAI said. "We don't believe this kind of govt access process should become the long-term default," OpenAI said in a blog post.

The model will initially be made available to 20 partners, Bloomberg News previously reported, and a path to access it will be via Amazon's Bedrock software platform. The govt's involvement in the rollout adds to growing pressure from the White House on AI developers. BLOOMBERG

US starts vaccine effort for Ebola Bundibugyo as outbreak spreads

The US is working on finding a vaccine targeting the Bundibugyo strain of Ebola while sending an experimental treatment and preparing diagnostic tests to help contain the outbreak in Africa, the department of health and human services said on Friday.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has reported 1,203 confirmed cases of Ebola, including 321 deaths, since the outbreak was declared in mid-May, according to the latest report released by the country's public health authorities.

According to the report, released on Friday (local time), 148 patients have recovered, while 419 patients are in isolation or receiving hospital care. REUTERS, IANS

UN: 6.8m people may be affected by Venezuela quakes

Close to seven million people may have been impacted by the twin earthquakes in Venezuela, the United Nations estimated on Saturday. "Up to 6.76 million people could be affected by the devastating earthquakes that struck Venezuela on 24th June," the UN's International Organization for Migration said in a statement, adding that the projections were based on available population and damage analysis. Venezuelan officials said the toll rose to 1,430 on Saturday. AFP

PE firms are snapping up Portugal's family businesses

Getty Images/iStockphoto

Famous arch at the Praca do Comercio, Lisbon, Portugal. Many of the country's most prominent companies remain controlled by families

When Stefano Saviotti decided to sell his Portuguese hotel empire, the challenge wasn't finding a buyer, it was finding a successor. The Italian-born entrepreneur had spent decades building the Dom Pedro hotel group into one of Portugal's best-known hospitality businesses, but as he approached his 80th birthday, with no children to take over, he began planning for the future. "At a certain point, I decided it was time to pass the baton," said Saviotti.

He sold six of Dom Pedro's seven hotels and all five of its golf courses to British asset manager Arrow Global in 2023, in a deal valued at about €250 million ($272 million).

Family-owned companies account for 70% to 80% of Portuguese businesses, employ about half the workforce and generate roughly 65% of gross domestic product, according to estimates from PwC.

Across the country, thousands of founders who built companies over the past few decades are reaching retirement age, often without family members willing to take over. This is drawing private equity firms and foreign investors, who are targeting family-owned businesses, to Portugal.

A lack of family succession led João Ferreira, owner of Lisbon funeral home Funerária Matias e Ferreira, to sell his decades-old business to Servilusa, Portugal's largest funeral services company in 2019. Servilusa is owned by the Spanish insurance group Grupo Catalana Occidente.

Last year, MFE-MediaForEurope NV, the broadcaster controlled by Italy's Berlusconi family, agreed to acquire a 32.9% stake in Portuguese media company Impresa through a capital increase. Impresa, Portugal's largest private media group, was founded by the Balsemão family, which remains its largest shareholder.

US private equity firms are among those reportedly interested in buying the packaging manufacturer Logoplaste, which is majority-owned by the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan. Its founding Botton family retains a minority stake.

The booming succession business has drawn investment bankers, wealth managers and private equity firms to set up offices in Lisbon.

Portugal can be a tough place for a foreign investor to operate, as many of smaller deals are sourced through personal relationships rather than formal auctions. Investors have to spend considerable time travelling across the country, particularly in the north and centre, where family-owned industrial businesses are concentrated.

A recent influx of foreign residents, who now account for about 15% of the population, has added a new source of growth — and fresh opportunities for private equity firms seeking to consolidate sectors and expand local champions beyond the domestic market.

Valuations in Portugal are generally lower than in larger Western European markets, and many companies occupy strong positions in niche export industries. BLOOMBERG

DAILY PLANET

AP

WHEN VESPA TURNS 80: Loyalists rally in front of Colosseum during the 80th anniversary celebrations of the Vespa scooter, in Rome, Saturday. An icon of the Italian way of life, thousands of riders paraded through Rome on the legendary scooters. Featuring in cinema classics like "Roman Holiday" and "La Dolce Vita", the Vespa has a long association with the Eternal City. The Vespa, which means "wasp" in Italian — a reference to the sound of its engine — was born on 23 April 1946, when the first patent for its manufacture was filed in Italy by Piaggio. It is still produced at the Pontedera site in Tuscany

SOUTH AFRICA BRACES FOR STIR AGAINST ILLEGAL MIGRANTS

AFP

Supporters of 'March and March' protest the presence of undocumented migrants in South Africa in Verulam, on Saturday. 'March and March' has staged several weeks of mostly small-scale protests against migrants who it says are in South Africa illegally and are placing additional pressure on already stretched public services and taking jobs from locals. It has called for a larger demonstration on June 30, which it has also set as an ultimatum for undocumented migrants to leave the country. 'March and March' isn't the only one targeting foreigners. The All Truck Drivers Forum & Allied South Africa group is planning a coordinated slowdown to highlight longstanding grievances over the employment of foreign drivers

Temperature records being shattered as deadly heatwave bakes European nations

Berlin/Milan/Copenhagen: From Scandinavia to the Alps, Europeans endured sweltering conditions on Saturday as a heatwave linked to dozens of deaths spread east, shattering records with temperatures in some areas soaring above 40°C.

Preliminary all-time temperature records were set on Saturday in Germany, Denmark and the Czech Republic, and a new mark for the month of June in Switzerland. Similar records have been broken earlier this week in France and UK.

Scientists said the heatwave would've been virtually impossible without man-made climate change, which has made this week's night-time temperatures 100 times more likely than they would have been even two decades ago.

On Friday, a new German record of 41.3°C was hit near the city of Saarbruecken on the French border, Germany's National Meteorological Service said, citing data.

The Danish Meteorological Institute reported a 37°C reading north of the city of Aarhus on Saturday, the highest on record since measurements began in 1874.

In France, dozens of people, both young and old, have died during the heatwave.

Rail operators encourage travellers to cancel rides

Struggling with the prospect of damage to infrastructure, including buckling roads and swelling train tracks, some rail providers have sought to reduce traffic. German national rail operator Deutsche Bahn allowed customers to cancel long-distance travel into early next week. Another operator, National Express, said it would suspend some trains on Saturday afternoon as a precaution. Near Hamburg, the main traffic lane on one of Germany's busiest motorways was partially closed after heat split the asphalt.

Sea water advances inland through river Po in Italy

Italy's health ministry issued a red alert for the heatwave in 18 cities including Milan, Rome, Turin, Venice, Genoa, Florence and Bologna for Saturday and Sunday.

The flow of the River Po has dropped dramatically, with seawater advancing deep inland, posing threats to local farming and the ecosystem of Italy's most important waterway. REUTERS

This royal herd of Rwanda cattle is treated to poetry

A flute here, a line of poetry there. Such is the daily treatment of Rwanda's royal cows that have become living symbols of the nation's cultural heritage. With their long and crescent-shaped horns, the Inyambo cows graze at the King's Palace Museum in Nyanza and at the homes of some of Rwanda's richest people, including President Paul Kagame. The breed is descended from the distinctive Ankole cattle of East Africa and is also found in neighbouring Uganda and Burundi. The Inyambo have long been associated with nobility, raised in royal courts where they symbolised wealth, prestige and power. The monarchy no longer exists, but Rwanda seeks more tourists and is investing heavily in places like the King's Palace Museum, where the Inyambo cows are the main attraction. The cows are pampered with poetry describing their beauty and calling them by their names.

Harry & family to stay at royal residences on UK visit

Estranged British prince Harry, his wife Meghan and two children will stay at royal residences during their first family trip back to the UK in four years in July, a source said on Saturday.

SUNDAY

JUNE 28, 2026 | METRO | PAGES 30 | INCLUDING BANGALORE TIMES

B'luru's Pratitee Bordoloi, 13, Wins Silver At FIDE World U-18 Chess Championship in Italy, earns her first Woman Int'l Master norm 16

Estd.1838 | VOL. 35 NO. 26 | BENGALURU

Madhav rejects claims of track 2 talks with Pak

BJP member Ram Madhav has dismissed reports claiming India and Pakistan have engaged in track 2 diplomacy in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Rejecting claims that he was associated with the talks, Madhav said, "It was IISS annual South Asia Dialogue, which was attended by scholars from India, Sri Lanka, US, UK, Afghanistan and Pakistan". **P 10**

Rowdy sheeter hacked to death

A rowdy sheeter, Rajubhai alias Raju, 29, was hacked to death in JP Nagar on Saturday evening. Police said the attackers arrived in a car, chased him as he tried to flee and repeatedly assaulted him with machetes, killing him on the spot even as passersby watched helplessly. No arrests have been made. TNN

YouTuber harassing women riders held

A YouTuber has been arrested in Delhi for allegedly targeting women riders and girls by crashing into their vehicles, stalking and harassing them, and uploading videos of the incidents on social media for popularity and monetisation through views. TNN

Man gives rat poison at Muharram event

A 39-year-old Pune resident has been arrested after police caught him distributing capsules mixed with a highly toxic rodenticide to devotees in a Muharram procession in Mumbai late Friday. **P 8**

Rain deficit now at 43%, likely to end at over 10%

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New Delhi: Rainfall deficit of 43% as on Saturday will be reduced once the monsoon covers the entire country next month but the season, already affected by El Niño, may not get the climatic cushion of Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) to offset the impact this year. In effect, there is now a very high probability of the overall monsoon ending up in more than 10% deficit as predicted by IMD.

Though a positive IOD does not guarantee a good monsoon rainfall, it often reduces the damage caused by El Niño. As a result, some El Niño years have still seen near-normal rainfall because a strong positive IOD supported the monsoon.

▶**Meghalaya at 82%, P 11**

Anushka Gupta

Amid intense heat and high humidity on Saturday, Delhiites came out of their houses with their heads covered

Central Europe bakes in record heat

Temperatures soared to record highs from Switzerland to the Czech Republic and Denmark on Saturday, as a heat wave that baked western European countries this week moved to central and eastern parts of the continent. Unusually high temperatures were recorded even in the Nordic countries not known for sweltering summers. Paris and 36 other regions, stretching from the center to the east and northeast, remained in the extreme-heat red zone. In Germany, train operator Deutsche Bahn and other rail companies advised against all non-essential train travel this weekend. **P 12 & Inside Jacket**

Trump may visit India early next yr, says Rubio

Washington: US secretary of state Marco Rubio has said the Trump administration is working towards President Donald Trump's visit to India in the early part of next year, underscoring the growing momentum in India-US ties as the two countries move closer to concluding a bilateral trade agreement.

In an interview with IANS, Rubio said he expected to travel to India before the end of the year to prepare for the president's visit.

Rubio said the India-US relationship was in a strong position. "I think it's going fantastic. I mean, it's very strong," he said. "We had a great meeting with the PM. The president did [have a good bilateral] at G7." IANS

▶**A close partner, P 11**

ALL IN A DAY

- Iran launches **drone assault on Bahrain** while ship is attacked in Strait of Hormuz, in Tehran's likely **response to US airstrikes**
- 9 Indian- and foreign-flagged ships cross strait in past 72 hours, **7 of these are carrying India-bound cargo**
- Slamming Israel-Lebanon deal as 'surrender', **Hezbollah deems it null and void**

Passport holders treated as citizens for RTI

Amid recent reiterations that a passport is not conclusive proof of citizenship, records of inter-ministerial deliberations in 2010 show that the external affairs ministry and home ministry agreed that passport-holders could be treated as citizens for the purpose of seeking information under Right to Information (RTI) Act.

Passport holders living abroad were differentiated from Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs); the latter two cannot take recourse to RTI. **P 11**

SC takes 14 yrs on criminal case, 2 convicts die waiting

Trial Court Took 5 Yrs, HC Took 10 On 1997 Case

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The appeal in Supreme Court came up for hearing on 12 dates since 2012

New Delhi: Even as Supreme Court has repeatedly invoked the legal maxim that 'justice delayed is justice denied' — with CJI Surya Kant recently saying "justice delayed is justice destroyed" — the apex court has, on many occasions, taken more time than trial courts and HCs to decide a case.

In one criminal case of culpable homicide not amounting to murder, SC took almost 14 years to decide the appeal. During this period, two out of three convicts died.

The trial court had wrapped up the proceedings in five years and Uttarakhand HC disposed of the appeal in 10 years. The appeal in SC came up for hearing on 12 dates over the last 14 years, according to the record available on the apex court website.

The case pertains to an altercation over the sale of a Rs 500 watch in 1997 which provoked a fist fight, causing the seller to lose his life after falling into a dry canal. The trial court convicted the three accused in 2002 and awarded them five-year imprisonment. The trio moved the HC, which upheld the conviction and punishment in 2012. They went to Supreme Court in Sept 2012.

Taking note of the lapse of almost 30 years and considering the age of the convict, a bench of Justices Ujjal Bhuyan and Arun Palli reduced his sentence to the imprisonment undergone by him which was one-and-a-half years.

"The incident occurred on Feb 12, 1997. The appellant was 33 years old. Today, we are in 2026, almost three decades have gone by since then. The appellant is now well over 60... We have also noted the genesis of the altercation between the deceased and the accused... All the injuries... clearly occurred because of the fall into the dry canal which had a rock-bed," the bench said.

"At this distant point of time, we are of the view that it would meet the ends of justice if we alter the sentence of imprisonment from RI for five years to the period already undergone while maintaining the conviction," it said.

HC ends 27-yr battle with ₹40L to SBI sweepers

Cuttack: Orissa HC brought the curtains down on a legal battle spanning 27 years by directing SBI to pay Rs 20 lakh each as lumpsum compensation to two daily-wage sweepers instead of granting them regularisation of service, reports **Lalmohan Patnaik**.

Mayadhar Nayak and Baina Nayak filed appeals challenging a single judge's June 20, 2025 order dismissing a plea to regularise their services. Both had been engaged as daily-wage sub-menial staff of SBI's govt treasury branch in Bhubaneswar since 1995.

Before delivering the verdict on June 23, the division bench of Justices Krishna S Dixit and Chittaranjan Dash explored a negotiated settlement. SBI offered Rs 5 lakh each to the workers, but they declined. The appellants said they would be satisfied with Rs 25 lakh each. The HC held Rs 20 lakh each "would do complete justice to both sides".

Rape is a legal term, not a medical one: Allahabad HC

Prayagraj: Allahabad HC has rejected a decades-old defence that an "old and torn hymen" casts doubt on a rape charge, ruling that it cannot entitle an accused to the benefit of doubt if the survivor's testimony is reliable, reports **Rajesh Kumar Pandey**.

Upholding a 1983 conviction and three-year prison term in a case dating to 1982, Justice Santosh Rai made it clear that medical findings could not trump a credible account given by a survivor, saying, "Rape is a legal term, not a medical term."

The HC said a hymen may tear for several reasons, including sports, cycling, gymnastics, horse riding, strenuous physical labour or accidental injury. Some women are born with a perforated or absent hymen, while others have a highly elastic one. Such medical findings could not be treated as conclusive evidence to discredit a rape survivor, it said.

The prosecution alleged that a 15-year-old girl had gone to relieve herself near a village canal when Rakesh and a co-accused intercepted and raped her. The additional sessions judge of Prayagraj convicted and sentenced Rakesh to three years in jail in May 1983.

The defence argued before the HC that the medical report described the girl's hymen as "torn", suggesting she was habituated to sexual intercourse.

Rejecting the plea, the HC said: "Merely because the doctor opined that the hymen was old and torn, it cannot be concluded that the accused did not commit rape."

Relying on Supreme Court's 2013 ruling in Ganga Singh vs State of Madhya Pradesh, HC held that a rape survivor's testimony requires no corroboration if it is natural, truthful and trustworthy. It found the survivor's account wholly reliable and corroborated by medical evidence.

The HC directed Rakesh to pay a fine of Rs 50,000, to be disbursed to the survivor or her legal representatives.

Mom can go abroad with kids, but can't disrupt dad's vacation: HC

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> **I believe that having the mother accompany the children on the same flight and stay in the same hotel could be counterproductive and may hinder the children's ability to enjoy their vacation with their father and best friend**
>
> **JUSTICE NEELA GOKHALE**
> Bombay HC

Panaji: Bombay HC has allowed a woman locked in divorce proceedings to travel abroad during her minor daughters' vacation with their father, but barred her from staying at the same hotel or disrupting their holiday.

Justice Neela Gokhale warned that any breach of its directions could cost her. The court "explicitly cautioned" that if the girls complained that their mother had intervened or interfered in their trip with their father, it may impose restrictions on her access to them.

The woman from Goa had challenged an order granting the father eight days of custody and permission to take their daughters abroad. Alternatively, she sought permission to accompany them and asked the court to direct the father to arrange and pay for her travel and stay.

After interacting with both girls, the HC said they were comfortable travelling with their father and were excited about the vacation. "Hence, there is no reason to direct the respondent (father) to make arrangements and incur expenditure for the petitioner's travel to accompany him and his daughters," the court said.

"I believe that having the mother accompany the children on the same flight and stay in the same hotel could be counterproductive and may hinder the children's ability to enjoy their vacation with their father and best friend," the HC said.

The court, however, allowed the mother to travel during the same period at her own expense, citing her concern for her daughters' safety. Earlier directions requiring the father to facilitate morning and evening video calls between mother and daughters will continue.

Court denies Armyman bail in murder case, points to buried body, digital trail

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> **The soldier threw the victim's phone into a Hyderabad-bound truck to mislead police, a tactic shown in 'Drishyam'**

Nagpur: Bombay HC's Nagpur bench has refused bail to an Army soldier accused of murdering his girlfriend (32), saying the prosecution had produced "clinching circumstances" that prima facie linked him to what police described as a Bollywood movie-style crime.

Justice MM Nerlikar said the case rested on circumstantial evidence but the chain of events appeared complete. "A man may lie, but circumstances never lie," the judge said.

According to the prosecution led by Neeraj Jawade, the woman left home on Aug 28, 2024, telling her family she was visiting a friend, but never returned. Her brother filed a missing complaint at Beltarodi police station, following which cops lodged an FIR for kidnapping against an unknown accused.

Police alleged the soldier posted in Nagaland travelled to Nagpur without informing his wife. To dodge surveillance, he allegedly left his phone at home and carried his mother's handset.

The HC relied on call detail records and the statement of the victim's friend, who said the woman left home around 9.30pm to meet the soldier. When the friend called his phone, his mother said he was not home and then claimed he was asleep.

Investigators said the soldier later threw the victim's phone into a Hyderabad-bound truck to mislead police, a tactic shown in the movie 'Drishyam'. The phone was later found with the truck driver in Telangana.

Police said the accused led investigators to a secluded spot where the woman's decomposed body had been buried in a pit, covered with stones and sealed with cement stolen from a nearby construction site. A stone allegedly used in the murder was found and matched the medical findings of fatal head wounds, the prosecution said.

Police claimed during the interrogation, the soldier said he was divorced and had relationships with many women, including the victim.

Airlines not liable for delays due to bad weather: Gujarat consumer panel

Times News Network

A couple approached the panel after missing their flight to Colombo, as their Air India plane was diverted due to near-zero visibility in Delhi

Ahmedabad: Airlines cannot be held responsible for flight delays caused by circumstances beyond their control, Gujarat Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission has held, dismissing an appeal for compensation against Air India over a flight diversion due to dense fog at Delhi airport.

The complainants, Kirit and Sonal Trivedi, were travelling from Ahmedabad to Colombo via Delhi on Nov 6, 2016. However, due to fog and near-zero visibility at Delhi airport, the aircraft was diverted to Jaipur. It reached the capital several hours later, causing them to miss their onward flight.

The couple unsuccessfully sued the airlines with Ahmedabad District Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission for the financial losses suffered as they lost a day of sightseeing under a tour package and could not utilise a non-refundable resort booking. They also questioned the airline's handling of the situation.

After the district commission rejected their complaint, the two appealed before the state commission, where Air India contended that the diversion was necessitated solely by adverse weather conditions and was undertaken in the interest of flyer safety. It further submitted that it had arranged for the passengers to stay at a hotel in Delhi and accommodated them on the next available flight to Colombo.

The state commission said, "... Given the extraordinary circumstances, there is no deficiency in service."

"The evidence on record overwhelmingly establishes that the diversion of the flight on Nov 6, 2016, was a direct and proximate consequence of zero visibility and dense fog at New Delhi airport, conditions that were entirely beyond the control of the airlines. The crew acted in strict compliance with the mandatory safety directives of DGCA in diverting the flight and took all reasonable steps to minimise the inconvenience to the affected passengers by providing free accommodation and arranging the earliest possible onward flight," the commission said.